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MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN,

THE AMERICAN NOVELIST.

AUTHOR OF

WIELAND, ORMOND, ARTHUR MERVYN, &c.

WITH SELECTIONS

26492

FROM HIS

ORIGINAL LETTERS,

AND MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.

BY

WILLIAM DUNLAP.

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MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN.

It is generally expected that the subjects of biography should be men, who, having attracted the world's gaze by their deeds, their inventions, or their writings, leave at their death a strong curiosity, to be satisfied by a detail of their private lives, and the circumstances which led to their notoriety. But the subject of the present work had not attracted that universal notice, nor excited that interest, even among his countrymen generally, which would authorize the writing his life upon the principle of gratifying public curiosity; yet there are not wanting sufficient reasons to induce an expectation that this volume will excite interest, convey instruction, and induce a lively regret that its

subject was prevented by death, from attaining that celebrity, which his talents and acquirements must have gained for him, and of leaving to his country works of the highest importance, both scientific and literary.

Charles Brockden Brown was among the earlier adventurers into the world of fiction, and the painful path of public amusement or instruction, by the pen and the press, whom the United States of America produced; and the early adventurers in all perilous undertakings are justly objects of curiosity and interest. Those who first saw the propriety of men in a new and better political state, throwing off the shackles of an absurd prejudice, in favour of European opinions and writings, as they had thrown from them the proffered chains, and rejected the pretensions of European tyranny; those who first saw that the inhabitants of a country, no less removed by the enjoyment of greater liberty and better forms of government, by the more extensive diffusion of the benefits of education and property, and the consequent greater purity of public morals, from the tyranny and intolerance of the long-established governments of Europe, and the squalid ignorance and poverty of the principal part of their population, than by the remoteness of their situation from the ordinary

range of European politics and influence of European ambition; those, who at the same time that they acknowledge the inestimable value of English, French, and German literature, saw the necessity of establishing a literature for their own country; who saw the advantages of publications suited to a new state of manners and political economy, and which should not only produce original instruction, but point out and sever the good from the bad, in the literature and institutions of Europe; however inefficient their efforts may have been, they are entitled to the thanks of their countrymen, and will hereafter be esteemed, not merely in proportion to that which they performed, but to the effects of their efforts upon those who follow in the path they opened. On this ground, as well as on that of uncommon talents and exemplary virtues, the subject of the following pages is entitled to a large portion of public attention.

It may be asserted, that no man contemns the credit which is derived from ancestry. The honours which are bestowed, or assumed, from the mere circumstance of being able to speak of the fame or virtues of our forefathers, are doubtless of little value in comparison with those honours which personal merit obtains; yet they are, in the opinion of mankind, of

some worth, and are felt to be so by each individual. Of this species of credit, Charles Brockden Brown had a larger share than falls to the lot of the greater portion of mankind: and stood on the happy level with most of his fellow-citizens of the United States. His parents were virtuous, religious people, and as such held a respectable rank in society; and he could trace back a long line of ancestry holding the same honourable station. Natives of England, and professing those religious opinions which drew upon the first of the sect the contemptuous appellation of Quaker (an appellation which, though bestowed in reviling, has become a name of honour and adoption through the virtues of the possessors) his ancestors fled from the persecutions of their country in the same ship with William Penn, and trusted to the savages and the wilderness, rather than to the justice of their countrymen.

Charles Brockden Brown was born on the seventeenth day of January, in the year 1771, in the city of Philadelphia.

Brown is one of those names which belongs to so great a portion of those who descend from English parentage, that it ceases to identify an individual. Brockden is a happy addition which was derived from a distant relation whose

history, as preserved in the traditionary records of the family, is too remarkable to be passed over without notice.

Charles Brockden lived in England, under the reign of the infamous Charles the Second. It is well known that the latter part of the life of the monarch was disturbed, if not by conscience, at least by the dread of the people's vengeance. Reports of plots and conspiracies disturbed the pensioner of France, even in the arms of his mistresses. Charles Brockden was at that time a student in the office of a lawyer who was deeply implicated in one of these plots. The conspirators assembled at the house of his master for the purpose of holding a consultation on the most practicable mode of accomplishing their design. Brockden in an adjoining room heard distinctly the whole of their conversation, but was at length, by some untoward accident, discovered by the conspirators. Aware of his danger he counterfeited sleep; but so serious was the dread of detection, excited by this circumstance in the minds of the conspirators, that for their mutual security, the majority of them resolved upon his immediate death. His master wishing to preserve the life of his apprentice, represented him as too stupid to comprehend

the meaning of their conversation, had he listened to it, and used his eloquence to persuade them not to embrue their hands in the blood of an innocent boy. They yielded for the time, but so great was his personal danger afterwards, from the returning apprehensions of the conspirators, that his master insisted on his embracing the first favourable opportunity of embarking for America. This the boy accordingly did, and was promoted by his talents and industry to an important office in the province of Pennsylvania, which he filled with dignity and honour. From this person Charles Brown inherited the additional name of Brockden.

Charles Brockden Brown at a very early period of childhood acquired that fondness for books which increased with him through life. Possessing a frail and delicate constitution he seldom mingled in the sports of children, and that spirit of curiosity which is strong within us at our entrance upon the bustling scenes of life, not being gratified or dissipated by the usual communication and exertions of childhood, found in books a delightful source of knowledge, and an inexhaustible fund of amusement. The mind of Charles was intensely devoted to reading, at an age in which boys are usually exhausting their superabundant spirit of animation in what

appears idle recreation, but which often gives spring and force to both mental and physical exertion in future life. His parents relate, that when but an infant, if they left home, he required nothing but a book to divert him, and on their return they would find him musing over the page with all the gravity of a student. On his return from school they would find him at the hour of dinner in the parlour, where, having slipped off his shoes, he was mounted on a table and deeply engaged in the consultation of a map suspended on the side of the wall. It was thus that in Charles intellectual labour itself became a species of recreation; and thinking, which is to the uncultivated so laborious and irksome an occupation, became to him the most delightful of employments.

At the age of ten Charles was reproved by a visitor of his father's for some remark, which probably ought to have called forth commendation, by the contemptuous appellation of *boy*. After the guest had departed, "Why does he call me boy?" said Charles; "does he not know that it is neither size nor age, but understanding, that makes the man? I could ask him an hundred questions, none of which he could answer." At this period of his life he was so intimately acquainted with the science of geo-

graphy, that he became a sort of gazetteer to his father, and would point out to him on the map or chart almost any part of the world which he made inquiry after; and could generally give some account of the place.

With habits so happily adapted to derive every advantage from instruction and disciplined study, he entered the school of Robert Proud, now well known as the author of the history of Pennsylvania. At the age of eleven he received from this gentleman the rudiments of the Latin and Greek languages; and Mr. Proud always spoke in the most flattering terms of his rapid proficiency and unabating industry. The constitution of Charles, at all times delicate, was now breaking down beneath the efforts which strengthened and enriched his mind. What pity it is that the application which most assimilates man to the exalted idea that we form of immortal perfection should so certainly tend to enfeeble his body and shorten his mortal existence, while the brutalizing occupations of continued and thought-expelling labour, give firmness, vigour, and duration to the frame of man. We are thus, however, taught to check the ardent pursuit of knowledge, and deny gratification to our love of seclusion; to recal our minds to the mingled scenes of society, and impose upon our

bodies the necessary tasks of labour and healthful exercise. Charles's preceptor at this time recommended an abstinence from study, and prescribed relaxation and excursions into the country as indispensable for the re-establishment of his health.

The excursions of Charles were made on foot, and so great was the benefit which he received from his pedestrian exercises, that he continued the practice ever after. The man who is habituated to solitary walking knows that it is impossible to make the mind move with the same creeping pace which is imposed upon the body; ever alert, it flies into every region of the known and unknown world, and while the feet measure the distance between two mile-stones, the mind ranges through the boundless regions of possible existence. Hence arises an habitual abstraction, which operating upon a mind so previously prepared as that of Charles's, caused, from a total unconsciousness of what was passing about him, or of the flight of time, or the progress of his feet, such unseasonable rambles as often to excite great uneasiness in the different members of his family.

After he left the school of Mr. Proud, which was before he had completed the sixteenth year of his age, he wrote a number of essays, some in

verse and some in prose. Amongst these may be mentioned, a version of a part of the book of Job, some of the psalms of David, and several passages of Ossian. At the age of sixteen he sketched plans of three distinct epic poems, one on the discovery of America, another on Pizarro's conquest of Peru, and a third on Cortez's expedition to Mexico. With these he was much engrossed, and for some time thought life only desirable as a mean for their accomplishment.

About this time Charles busied himself in inventing a species of short-hand writing, and actually enabled himself to take down the words of a speaker almost as rapidly as they are usually uttered; he likewise studied, unassisted but by books, the French language. In this state of intellectual revelry, by diversifying his studies and pursuits, he gave to each a character of novelty, which answered the purposes of relaxation, and by the aid of his pedestrian rambles kept up as ample a portion of strength and health as the nature of his constitution and the slender texture of his body would admit.

But amidst the diversities of study and changes of avocation in which his active mind ran riot, it now became indispensably necessary for him to make his choice of a profession. That freedom

almost amounting to licentiousness with which Charles roved unguided in pursuit of knowledge, had not fitted him for the severe study of one science; however, he made his choice of the profession of the law. This science, to a mind so ardent in the pursuit of information, opened a wide and inexhaustible field for indulgence. It is withal, in this country, one of the roads to opulence, and the most certain path to political importance and fame. Charles needed not the importunity of friends or relatives to decide his choice in favour of the law; and was, with high expectations of future eminence in that profession, apprenticed to Alexander Wilcox, esq., an eminent lawyer of Philadelphia.

There is no circumstance of more importance to a man's future welfare, than that his early associates should be happily chosen. Brown selected for his first set of friends, several young men of brilliant talents, amiable dispositions, and ardent minds; who, though all of characters very distinct from his, excited his emulation, and called into action his mental powers. He at this time became one of a society for debating questions of law, and had for associates young men who have since been the ornaments of the profession; yet Charles was, amongst these, distinguished both for solidity of judgment, and acuteness of investigation.

After the day passed in Mr. Wilcox's office, Charles retired to his chamber, and recorded in a journal all the incidents and reflections which had occurred in that space of time. He composed and transcribed letters, and even copied into his journal the epistles he received from his correspondents. This severe tax upon his time was intended for improvement both in *thinking* and writing, and as a record of that improvement. He was always anxious to acquire a facility of writing, and a correct graceful style; and journalizing was the first expedient which suggested itself to him for the accomplishment of that desirable object. He early, however, studied with assiduity the writings of the best English authors, with the same view: and those who have attended to his later writings, will not hesitate to give great praise to the style in which they are composed, and to lament that so early a period was put by death to the rapid improvement of his rich and active mind.

Among the associates of Brown, was one of the name of Davidson, who conceived the design of forming and establishing a literary society. Brown was invited to become a member; but not having at that time a just idea of the improvement always derived from such associations, he entered reluctantly into the plan; but soon became the leader, and prepared a set of rules,

which were adopted with some slight modifications. The society consisted of nine members, and was called the Belles Lettres Club. Its object was two-fold—improvement in composition and eloquence; and in both, there is good reason to believe that Brown excelled his companions.

As member of the law society, Charles was no less zealous and active. While president, it was part of his official duty to record his judgment on the questions debated. These records are now preserved, and they afford an honourable testimony to his sagacity, sound judgment, and research. They are likewise delivered in a style of gravity becoming a judge, and widely different from that in which he usually wrote.

It has been remarked by a friend, "that the most complicated judgment," recorded by Charles, "embracing reported cases of unusual subtlety, with his reasons at length, on a question by far the most difficult that fell to his province to decide, is delivered with more perspicuity than any of the rest, in a language destitute of all embellishment, and with peculiar nicety of detail. He was, in fact," continues the same friend, "a model of the dry, grave, and judicial style of argument. Directly after he had disposed of the question, as appears from his journal, he gave vent to his fancy in a poetical effusion, as

much distinguished by its wild and eccentric brilliancy, as the other composition was for its plain sobriety and gravity of style. They are perfect opposites; and any one who perused them, would with difficulty be persuaded that so much eccentricity, and so much regularity, were the productions of one man; much less would he believe them to have proceeded from the same source, with the interval of a few moments only."

While thus ostensibly studying law, but in reality indulging himself in every freak suggested by his love of literature and of fame, he presented himself to the world in the Columbian Magazine, in the character of "*A Rhapsodist.*" The first number of this series was published in the month of August, 1789.

Although the title was assumed, the character was not. Charles in these essays exhibits himself. We behold a young and ardent mind straining after unattainable perfection, always dissatisfied with and struggling to surpass its most successful efforts. He tells the world with what rapture he has held communion with his own thoughts amidst the gloom of surrounding woods, where his fancy has peopled every object with ideal beings, and the barrier between himself and the world of spirits, seemed burst

by the force of meditation. In this solitude he feels himself surrounded by a delightful society; but when he is transported from thence, and compelled to listen to the frivolous chat of his fellow beings, he then suffers all the miseries of solitude. He acknowledges, however, that his intercourse and conversation with mankind had wrought a salutary change; that he can now mingle in the concerns of life, perform his appropriate duties, and reserve that higher species of discourse for the solitude and silence of his study.

That Charles thus early saw the error of indulging in this romancing vein, and perceived that it unfitted him for the conversation and duties of real life, is here made evident; but that he had at this time or even much later in life, corrected the evil, was not true. He long after this period loathed the common pursuits and common topics of men, and appeared in society an eccentric, if not an isolated being.

About this time he published in an Edentown newspaper, a poetical address to Dr. Franklin. "The blundering printer," says Charles in his journal, "from his zeal or his ignorance, or perhaps from both, substituted the name of Washington. Washington therefore stands arrayed in awkward colours. Philosophy smiles to be-

hold her darling son; she turns with horror and disgust from those who have won the laurel of victory in the field of battle, to this her favourite candidate who had never participated in such bloody glory, and whose fame was derived from the conquests of philosophy alone. The printer by his blundering ingenuity made the subject ridiculous; every word of this clumsy panegyric was a direct slander upon Washington, and so it was regarded at the time."

The mimic practice of the law either as pleader or judge, which occurred in the debates of the society of students, was the only practice of the science which Charles was doomed to undertake. As the time approached which rendered it necessary for him to pass from the office of his master to one of his own, to consider real instead of fictitious cases, and mingle in real debate as the champion of the really oppressed, the mind of Brown shrank from the scenes he saw preparing for him, and conceived an antipathy to the profession which he had voluntarily chosen, which neither the persuasions and arguments of his friends, nor his own sense of duty, were sufficient to overcome.

Of the numbers who are educated for the profession of the law, very many in this country turn aside to some other pursuit, which appears to

them more profitable or less arduous. Many who have dissipated that time in idleness or licentious pleasures which should have been devoted to study, shrink from the practice of their intended profession, from a consciousness of ignorance, and a reluctance to encounter the laborious application known to be necessary. But none of these causes for relinquishing a chosen profession will apply to Charles Brockden Brown. The acquisition of wealth by another pursuit was not his inducement. Riches were not objects of desire with him at this period of his life, and by relinquishing his prospects of emolument from his profession, he threw himself as a helpless dependent upon his relatives. The fear of encountering arduous study did not deter him. The labour of thought and investigation, or of the application of the pen, had no terrors for him. Every species of riotous or licentious pleasure was his abhorrence. For the cause of that bitter regret and disappointment which he inflicted upon his family, we must look to some other source; and in the *Rhapsodist*, already quoted, we find it.

He had formed a world of his own in which he delighted to dwell, and with whose inhabitants he was habituated to commune, to the exclusion of the dull or sordid beings of real life.

The conversation which he heard passing among his fellow beings relative to those objects which constituted the sources of their joys and sorrows, appeared "frivolous chat," or, as doubtless it often was, the offspring of "folly, ignorance, and cupidity." Society was to him solitude, and in solitude he found delightful converse. It was this shrinking from society, this solitude, this wrong estimate of the views, motives and characters of mankind, which wrought so powerfully upon the mind of Brown, as to make him turn aside from the obvious path which led to competence, honour, and self-approbation.

Charles on this occasion persuaded himself that he acted rightly, or he would not so have acted. Yet this conviction being grounded on error, like all erroneous opinions, was subject to doubts and misgivings, which preyed upon his happiness and undermined his health. He had three brothers older than himself, all actively engaged in the pursuit of happiness and fortune, according to the usual fashion of the world; of these, and of his aged parents, he was the distinguished favourite; he was justly looked upon as the most highly-gifted member of the family, and as destined for their happiness and honour. His abandonment of the path chosen for him, was to them a serious disap-

pointment and affliction: and this, to Charles, who loved them with the purest fraternal and filial affection, was a cause of sorrow and unutterable regret.

To support himself against the persuasions and arguments of his friends, and against the suggestions of his own better judgment, he resorted to all the sophisms and parodoxes with which ignorance and ingenious prejudice had assailed the science or the practice of the law. He professed that he could not reconcile it with his ideas of morality to become indiscriminately the defender of right or wrong; thereby intimating, if not asserting, that a man must, in the practice of the law, not only deviate from morality, but become the champion of injustice. He would demand, what must be the feelings of a lawyer if he had become an auxiliary in the cause of wrong and rapine? If the widow and the orphan were thus by a legal robbery deprived of their just and righteous claims through the superior artifice or eloquence of the advocate, was he not as criminal as the man who committed such felony without the sanction of a court of justice, and for which the same court would pronounce the severest punishment? He endeavoured to persuade himself and his hearers, that unless a lawyer could reconcile his mind to the

practice of all this iniquity, there was little prospect of his succeeding in his profession, and of course that the acquisition of fame and fortune were only to be considered as proofs of the wrongs done, and the miseries inflicted upon his fellow men.

The friends of Brown did not easily relinquish the object of their wishes, or cease to urge arguments founded in truth, with all the eloquence of thorough conviction. They represented to him that men of irreproachable characters, who stood in the front ranks of honour, had acquired all their celebrity at the bar. His answer was, that the opinion of the world was always equivocal, sometimes suspicious, and often beyond all question wrong. The favourable regards of the world were conferred indiscriminately on virtue or vice, innocence or guilt; as all history evinces. Would this, or did it ever in a single solitary instance counterbalance the remorse of their own consciences when such good opinions were paid for services which they never performed, or to merit to which they had no pretensions? Was it not rather the severest of all satires, when we were applauded for virtues which we never possessed, and as unjust as it would be to violate a neighbour's property and to claim it as our

own? Did not the evil extend even farther than this, and was it not productive of more moral injury by appropriating the rewards of virtue, the good opinion of the world, to vice: and thus make a common property of what ought to belong exclusively to one, and confound all distinctions between right and wrong? In the present case he denied the validity of the evidence produced, and contended that whether these men were justly entitled to such celebrity could only be known by themselves. Their motives to conceal their real characters from the world were obvious and palpable, and if they were monopolizers of the fame of better and more deserving men, this was of itself an argument why he should not add another name to their list. The universality of such an evil might be a reason for reforming such abuses by stronger and more incessant exertions; but was clearly none why it should be rendered more diffusive, inveterate, and consequently more alarming, by his individual participation in the guilt.

These erroneous opinions which governed Charles in this important decision, he had good cause to renounce when too late for the change to remedy the evil. I shall have to record his intimate knowledge of men, who in the practice

of the law have invariably practised the dictates of justice and of honour, one of whom was among the most valued, tried, and best known of his friends.

His opinions respecting the practice of the law at a subsequent period, may be known by the following extract from a letter written in answer to one from a student who was impatient to be admitted to the bar.

" Your letter has indeed a very singular appearance, and I congratulate myself more than ever on the enjoyment of your friendship! What! is all this wisdom from a youth? whose passions are impetuous? who has been exposed to all the seductions of pleasure, with no other security than his own prudence and reflection? And is his conduct agreeable to those maxims? Justly then may he indulge the impulse of virtuous ambition, and please himself with the prospect of affluence and honours. Go on, amiable and experienced youth, and mayest thou speedily attain what thou so laudably aspirest after—the fair fame of integrity and the peace of virtue. These are purposes that are truly worthy of a rational being; purposes that are almost peculiar to thyself, which few men of whatever age make the object of their wishes, or prosecute with equal steadiness and diligence;

and which is still more rarely to be found in the mind of those of the same age.

" May the hour in which you expect to be admitted speedily arrive. Impatience is certainly unnecessary. That there are many things beside a knowledge of law requisite to form an advocate, is very obvious; and though your legal knowledge may qualify you long before April for admission, yet, my friend, there are other accomplishments which, whatever should be your diligence or resolution, you will scarcely have attained in the seventh April after the next. But if legal knowledge were the only requisite, yet your impatience is unreasonable, since while there remains any thing to be known, you cannot be esteemed perfect; since it is impossible for you to know too much; and since, after twenty or thirty years study, there will still be a legal something of which you are ignorant.

" It is true, that success in all the learned professions is too frequently the consequence of accident, and that men are not always rewarded exactly agreeably to their merits; but there are particular exceptions, and, as a general observation, it is undoubtedly true, that men of all professions, and particularly lawyers, are successful in proportion to their skill.

" I need not tell you what, in my opinion,

are the necessary accomplishments of a lawyer. Our sentiments, I believe, are somewhat different on this subject; but, however few and simple they may be, I cannot but still discover the necessity of time and patience, diligence, and the unreasonableness of your impatience for admission. Whatever be the qualifications of an accomplished lawyer, yet there are different degrees of excellence in them. This undoubtedly is his employment, to think, to write, and to speak. The certainty and facility with which he shall answer questions that come before him, will unquestionably depend on the degree of knowledge which he has acquired, and of the sagacity which he possesses. Study and reflection are the sources of legal knowledge, as of every other kind, and these sources are inexhaustible. From these fountains, therefore, whatever we possess must be drawn. But we cannot draw too much, and every possible accession to our store, must be not only not useless, but highly advantageous to us, whether we be eager for wealth or reputation.

"As a writer, both his style and his penmanship are improvable by practice. How far the qualities of style are entitled to his attention, may perhaps be a question; but that he has numerous occasions for the exercise of penman-

ship is indisputable; and that it is highly his interest to become master of an expeditious mode of writing. A lawyer, whether at court, or in his own closet, has perpetual use for his pen; and is it necessary to expatiate on the advantages of writing with as much rapidity as any man can articulate? or can you doubt either that you have not attained this, or that it is attainable?

"With respect to speech, it may not be incumbent on my friend to make himself an orator in the genuine sense. The talents of Cicero could not, perhaps, with propriety, be displayed in their full extent in any American court: but what is more necessary or desirable, than to deliver one's self with fluency and correctness? There are no ears to which the utmost degree of accuracy of reasoning and language is unsuitable—which cannot relish the utmost degree of perspicuity, both of expression and of argument. But have you already attained these qualifications? In short, can you, on all occasions, conceive, and express clearly, forcibly, and gracefully? to which I may add, rapidly? These are attainments within your power. The end is not unworthy the means. The more you acquire before admission to the bar, the less will remain to be acquired after. So little are

any of your pursuits, merely as a lawyer, obstructed by the delay of your admission, that it will, in reality, be favourable to them. There is a goal which you are desirous of reaching, and between which and yourself, there is an ample space. Now if your strength is at all times equal, if, whenever you begin this career, exactly the same space of time will be required to finish it, it is doubtless, proper to begin as soon as possible, because the sooner you begin, the sooner you will end; but if by delaying to begin for a reasonable time (two, three, or four years) you do not set the goal at a greater distance;—if, supposing you should begin now, you would reach it in seven years;—yet, if you should delay your enterprize for two years, and begin then, your strength and vigour would be augmented in the interval, so as to enable you to reach it as soon as another who began at this time, would not the delay be rather advantageous than otherwise? At least, is the advantage greater on one side than on the other? And are not these your circumstances, my dear W.? The longer you delay your admission, will you not be better qualified for practice? I have heard a gentleman observe, that were he a student of law, he would not begin to practise till he was twenty-seven or twenty-

eight years of age. But, my friend, perhaps your domestic circumstances would not suffer you to delay your admission so long, and I am sure that your present attainments would not justify so long a delay. You are very young, and though it would perhaps be impossible, or if possible, by no means necessary to continue a student for seven or eight years longer, yet to preserve that character for one or two years more would neither be impossible, nor improper. However you should think proper to determine, were it in your power to hasten or procrastinate your admission, yet these considerations ought at least to make you patient under unavoidable delays."

One of the earliest friends of Brown was a young man of singular beauty and animation, combined with talents of a most fascinating quality. The writer became acquainted with him through the introduction of Brown, and never has ceased to regret his premature death. The characters of Brown and W. were in most points essentially different, but composed of such contrarieties as never came into serious and repulsive collision. In depth and extent of inquiry, various and accurate knowledge, even on those points with which W. himself was most familiar,

Brown was pre-eminent. W. had a ready, persuasive and fascinating eloquence always at command; a fancy prompt and vigorous, with a wit which delighted even those at whose expense it was exerted. Such talents rendered him a valuable acquisition to the law society, for he too was a student preparing for the bar. If too careless or indolent to investigate his subject, he was ever able to adorn it, and was heard with delight, if not with conviction. Possessing a warm and susceptible heart, he early attached himself to Charles, and an acquaintance formed in the first instance by the casual meetings of the society, soon consolidated into a permanent friendship; a friendship which in fact existed until the death of W. When W. was present they were almost inseparable companions; when absent, they punctually corresponded. Amidst these testimonies of affection, some which are characteristic may be selected. In one of these Charles remarks, that the most perfect and refined misery is the price at which we buy just conceptions of propriety and duty, by acting in opposition to them. The miseries of vice and the blessedness of well doing, are attestations equally strong of the value and dignity of virtue; but the sense of this persuasion is proportioned to the extent of those opposite

consequences. Actions, he continues, are not the just criterion of sentiments. He proceeds to set before his correspondent the pleasures derived from the indulgence of virtuous love, a smiling family, and all the tender delights of honourable intercourse, the acquisition of riches and honours. He goes on to assert that his friend will hereafter realize the scene which his fancy is painting now; that he himself is only acting the character of the prophet, and dwells with peculiar delight in the indulgence of the visions which fact and not fancy discloses. The elegance of this reproof will be better understood, if we resort to the character of W. as it was drawn by Brown himself, after the death of that gentleman.

"I am led to these remarks, he continues, by reading over the letters of my deceased friend W. What a contrast between his actual deportment, and any notion of that deportment to be collected by a stranger from his letters! His letters to me are as confidential as letters can be, yet they form a picture totally the reverse of his conversation and his conduct. He had no small portion of wit, and this power was in part exercised in company; but the moment he took up his pen to write a letter or an essay, he forgot all his mirth, became pensive, sentimental,

and poetical. To hear him talk, one would think that he never had a serious moment in his life. He literally sung himself to sleep, and awakened in a burst of laughter. To see the effusions of his pen, one would imagine that he was a stranger to smiles; that he was for ever steeped in tears and wrapped in melancholy. In this there was nothing that deserved to be called affectation or hypocrisy, since he corresponded only with those with whom he was occasionally in the habit of conversing; and his tongue regaled them with unceasing jests, with just as much sincerity as his pen saddened them with its austerity, or melted them with its pathos. His sonnets and letters talk almost altogether of love, and on this subject no Petrarch was ever more tender, refined and pathetic. The youth was for ever in love, and was all impassioned eloquence at the feet of an adored fair one; but his love was merely the exuberance of health, and an ardent constitution. Consequently, his love was always bestowed upon the present object, and never stood in the way of the most licentious indulgences. After receiving a letter, full of the most doleful eulogies of some divine but refractory creature, and hinting his resolution to shake off the yoke of his inauspicious stars, I have hastened to his chamber to console

him, and found him at a table presiding with marks of infinite satisfaction, and keeping the worthy crew that surrounded him in a constant roar. Such was my friend, and such were his letters. His tongue and his pen, his actions and his written speculations, were as opposite to each other as the poles."

In one of the letters from Charles to W. may be found a sentiment of a very singular nature, as it shows his propensity to extract felicity from a subject which is commonly regarded as unfortunate. He had discovered by accident, that he was afflicted with a myopism, by having accidentally put on spectacles accommodated to such vision. He discovers that he possesses a vision superior to that of ordinary men. He had only to apply to his eyes, what Dr. Rush calls the aid of declining vision, and he is ushered into a new and beautiful creation. He observes that it is in his power to make the sun, the stars, and all surrounding creation sparkle upon his view with renovated lustre and beauty. Not satisfied with this, he goes on to compare his situation with the situation of those who had ever beheld the sun in all his majesty and effulgence. To him he had been in all his glories, a stranger; he had never been *familiarly* acquainted with so glorious a personage.

On the other hand, those who had always revelled in the magnificence of nature, had become satiated with its glory. Creation to them could unfold no new beauty; a glance of the eye satisfied them, and it was a glory that palled upon the sense. To him all this was a territory unseen, and it seemed as if nature had veiled her radiance from his view, to the end that he might, when he pleased, indulge himself in the enjoyment of her bounties. He was able to discern light enough to guide his footsteps, and to answer all the purposes of social intercourse; all beyond this was novelty, was exquisite enjoyment. To those who were surrounded with more expanse of vision, all these blessings were denied. He therefore felicitated himself on the thought that he had not the optics of ordinary men.

It has been already remarked, that he inherited from nature a frail, delicate, and sickly constitution; a constitution which incapacitated him for athletic exercise. In another letter to one of his correspondents, he congratulates himself on this infirmity. He is by the benevolence of nature rendered, in a manner, an exile from many of the temptations that infest the minds of ardent youth. Possessing such a constitutional infirmity, he had nothing to appre-

hend from those enticements which usually sway the minds of young men. He had by nature been devoted to contemplation. Whatever his wishes might have been, his benevolent destiny had prevented him from running into the frivolities of youth. He ascribes to this cause his love of letters, and his predominant anxiety to excel in whatever was a glorious subject of competition. Had he been furnished with the nerves and muscles of his comrades, it was very far from being impossible that he might have relinquished intellectual pleasures. Nature had benevolently rendered him incapable of encountering such severe trials.

From hence a question arose whether it was virtue in him to refrain from those pleasures which he felt no appetite to indulge in. He gravely dismisses the argument with his opinion that it was not. Far from repining, however, he earnestly prays that he may never be allowed a constitution sufficient to enable him to stand a trial so severe; that if his virtue must be placed under the patronage of nature, he may never be deserted by his guardian; that his constitutional imbecility may prevent his falling a victim to those temptations which he has not virtue enough to avoid.

That Charles was dissatisfied with his own

conduct in relinquishing his profession, and that the disappointment of his friends, and their anxiety for his future welfare preyed upon his spirits, is by no means doubtful with me. I will here give two extracts from his letters which develope his character, and show the gloom of his mind in this early period of his life.

"As for me, I long ago discovered that nature had not qualified me for an actor on this stage. The nature of my education only added to these disqualifications, and I experienced all those deviations from the centre, which arise when all our lessons are taken from books, and the scholar makes his own character the comment. A happy destiny indeed brought me to the knowledge of two or three minds which nature had fashioned in the same mould with my own, but these are gone. And, O God, enable me to await the moment when it is thy will that I should follow them."

"What, my friend, art thou certainly awake? Or is it that I am dreaming? No, I believe you incapable of adulation: and yet there are some parts of your acceptable epistle, which are extremely suspicious. But your motives do not only excuse, but justify you. When a friend is sinking into a quicksand or struggling with a

suffocating stream, there is nothing can betide him which is so dangerous as despair; and one, who, though near at hand, is unable to afford him any personal assistance, cannot be more serviceable to him, than by cherishing his hopes, and keeping him from yielding to despair: and if in the ardour of our exhortations, and the precipitancy of our zeal, we chance to deviate from rigid truth, and facilitate his escape, by invigorating his efforts with flattering representations of his power, and delusive promises of triumph, is it not more to be commended than censured?

"I have not been deficient in the pursuit of that necessary branch of knowledge; the study of myself. I will not explain the result, for have I not already sufficiently endeavoured to make my friends unhappy by communications, which though they might easily be injurious, could not be of any possible advantage. *I really, dear W.* regret that period when your pity was first excited in my favour. I sincerely lament that I ever gave you reason to imagine that I was not so happy, as a gay indifference with regard to the present, stubborn forgetfulness with respect to the uneasy past, and excursions into lightsome futurity could make me: for what end, what useful purposes were promoted by the discovery? It could not take away from the number of the

unhappy, but only add to it, by making those who loved me participate in my uneasiness, which each participation, so far from tending to diminish, would in reality increase, by adding those regrets of which I had been the author in them, to my original stock.

"I have a brother, whom I am bound by innumerable ties to revere and love. I have not seen him except for a few days, these eight years. He has gained wisdom by experience, a bitter series of experiments; but though there has subsisted no personal intercourse between us for so long a time, we have talked frequently and copiously to each other by the assistance of the pen. His letters are lessons—lessons of prudence, and there is no maxim which he has so frequently inculcated, as that of covering from the eyes of others, with an impenetrable mask, whatever fears or anxieties may agitate us.

"This precept I have broken only with regard to you and B. The propriety of this rule, I have frequently experienced from the advantages resulting from adhering to it; and may I not add that its propriety has also been evinced by the inconveniences which I have felt by deviating from it? For no man ought to act, but in pursuance of some rational motive, and what useful purpose could be answered by making C. B. B.

better known to his friends? What but their unhappiness could be produced by it?

"Forget me, my friend, as soon as possible. At least, forget that any latent anguish or corroding sorrow, is concealed under that aspect of indifference which has become habitual. Why should I any longer talk to you of myself? Why should my letters be the busy and malicious witnesses of my faults and follies? You are too young to be my father confessor. I wonder you have not declared your disapprobation of the usual strain of my epistles. I smile (though it must be owned, with less gaiety than seriousness) at the foolish part which I have acted so long, unreasonably and unnecessarily imparting sorrow to those whom I must wish happy in proportion as I love them, and calling out for consolations, which I know to be impossible to be obtained.

"For shame, thou idiot or thou madman! cease thy lamentable croakings. Reserve gloomy meditations and useless complaining for thy chamber, and show at least thy magnanimity by concealing that which thou canst not cure. Here drops the curtain. The catastrophe of the drama if acted openly, will only diffuse a melancholy gloom over the audience. All that remains shall be transacted in secret, and behind the scenes.

"Had I never had friends and relations, I am convinced that before this time I had ceased either to exist, or to exist as an inhabitant of America. I know from experience the strength of that obstacle to the direful schemes of despair, which results from possessing friends who would be, at least for a time, inconsolably afflicted by the loss of the sufferer. It is indeed my interest, perhaps, to add to the number of my friends, because in proportion to their number, will be the obstacles to any rash design.

"I have indeed sincerely lamented—I must lay down my pen till my thoughts flow in a less uneasy channel. Your letter has made me extremely serious. Why did you not comply with my request, and forbear to expatiate on this theme? but I flatter myself that you will pay more regard to it in future.

"I expected that I should give you pleasure by the information relating to your father; that good, worthy, hospitable man, whom I shall always remember with affection and respect both for his own sake, and that of his son. You cannot imagine how highly I am pleased with myself for my seasonable recollection of this interview, and my seasonable relation of it.

"It was my vanity, perhaps, that was pleased in your father's approbation of the friends whom

his son had chosen: and yet may I not reasonably believe that my friendship was useful to him? Will any one be made worse, will his understanding be depraved, or his heart be corrupted, by associating with me? Will his love of learning and of virtue be impaired? I think not; for I am neither incorrigibly stupid, nor remorselessly wicked. I am a lover and admirer of all that is good and fair in the physical and moral universe. No one gazes at genius with more enthusiastic delight and admiration, or at virtue with greater love and reverence. No: I am determined to believe that W. might have chosen a more pernicious and unprofitable friend.

"This part of my letter will require no answer. I know not indeed why it was written. I indeed find so much reason to censure and despise myself, that I expatiate with more pleasure, and consequently at greater length, on any circumstance of self-applause. I seize any thing, however weak and dubious, by which I can hope to raise myself from that profound abyss of ignominy and debasement, into which I am sunk by my own reflections. And that a man of so much experience and discernment as your father, approves the choice of his son of me as a friend, is too pleasing an idea to be easily re-

linquished, and is a counterbalance for many anxieties.

"Do you read the books which you mention? Is your reading altogether legal? Surely such constant and invariable legality is not indispensably necessary. I, indeed, am inclined to think that, so far from being necessary to adhere so strictly to the case, it is absolutely necessary sometimes to deviate from it; but it is likely that I am mistaken. If my own experience, were to determine my opinion, I should rather think that he only can derive pleasure, and consequently improvement, from the study of the law, who knows and wishes to know nothing else. As a student, I believe you have always acted in the most prudent and reasonable manner, and a method of which (abstractedly considered) the propriety should appear dubious to me, would be sufficiently vindicated by your practice."

A friend who had read the letters and journals of Mr. Brown makes the following remarks. He taxed his correspondents always to make themselves the heroes of their own letters: nothing, he said, was productive of so much delight as to hear of their welfare, to share their joys and their sorrows. On the other hand, in his own letters he sedulously avoided the mention of

himself, on the ground that he had nothing personal to communicate, which would give his correspondents pleasure; and his native delicacy forbade him to excite unnecessary pain. His correspondence, therefore, with his most intimate friends, wears a curious cast. On their side, is the utmost frankness in the disclosure of all the little circumstances affording them delight; on his part he joins in their joy, and revels in their intellectual hilarity; presents these circumstances again in a more fascinating shape, and makes his page the depository of all the benevolent sympathies in which he so munificently indulges. We should be led to suppose him entirely happy—that his heart was perfectly at ease. Now, in requital for all this frankness and confidence, what is communicated on his part? Literally nothing. When pressed on this subject, he declares that his own heart shall be the depository of its own gloomy sensations; and that when he cannot communicate pleasure, he will communicate nothing. He represents his afflictions as beyond the power of friendship to redress; and that it would be mean in him to excite sympathy so unavailing. "Do I wish the friendship of such men," he would say, "only to make myself a burthen to them? Must not they themselves despise me, if I thus

abuse their confidence, and endeavour to load them with the miseries which my unhappy fate has destined me to endure? Have I no other pleasure in friendship than what is derived from the miseries of my friends? No," he would say; "let me participate in all their joys and sorrows, but let my misfortunes be borne by myself." Thus does his private journal often furnish a most striking contrast to his familiar letters. By the former, we discover his heart to be oppressed with gloom and dejection; while, if we cast our eyes on a letter of the same date, we shall find him entering into all the gay and cheerful feelings of his friends—abandoning the contemplation of his own sorrows for a moment, to assist in the prolongation of their hilarity. His earliest character was formed on this romantic standard, nor did he ever renounce it afterwards. Not only in his epistolary, but in his personal intercourse with his friends, he acted on this principle: and if at any time he departed from this resolution by accident, he severely censures himself in his journal; taxes himself with pusillanimity, and makes the most ardent protestations that he will endeavour to amend. As an instance of his inflexible perseverance, he was once, at the house of a friend, afflicted with a malady by which his life was put in the most imminent

jeopardy. All the anxiety that he testified was, that he should become burthensome to his friends: a reflection which seemed to give him much more uneasiness than the pains with which he was afflicted.

Dissatisfied with himself, and with the most gloomy prospects of the future scenes destined for his lot in life, Charles, as if to avoid the presence of his disappointed friends, rambled from home without any apparently defined object. At New York he was introduced to the acquaintance of the writer, by Dr. Elihu Hubbard Smith.

E. H. Smith was a native of Litchfield, Connecticut, and only son of Dr. Reuben Smith, of that place. From his infancy attached to books, Elihu was at a very early period qualified to enter college, and was accordingly placed at Yale, then under the presidency of Dr. Styles. After passing through college with reputation, he was still a boy, and his father very judiciously placed him under the care and tuition of Dr. Dwight, now president of Yale College, then minister of Greenfield, Connecticut, and principal of an academy of high reputation in that village. After due preparation in medical studies under his father, Elihu was sent to Philadelphia for the purpose of completing his education as a physician, and in that city became an associate

of Brown's. Being qualified for practice, Dr. Smith fixed upon the city of New York for the place of his residence, and became the intimate associate and friend of the writer, so continuing until his death. To this inestimable young man I owed the friendship of Brown.

The first visit of Charles to New York was not of long duration, but he found himself so cordially adopted into a society so well suited to his taste and pursuits, that the visit was soon repeated, and for years succeeding, New York became almost the home of Brown. For several years it was my good fortune to have him as an inmate with my family, on these visits, sometimes at New York, and sometimes at Perth Amboy: but upon an establishment being formed in a commodious house in New York, by Dr. Smith, and Wm. Johnson, esq. Brown at their invitation joined them, and thenceforward only resided with me when my family was at Perth Amboy.

No two men were ever more sincerely attached to each other, than Charles Brockden Brown and Elihu Hubbard Smith; yet in many particulars no two men were ever more different. Both under the necessity of being economists, Brown acted as if he had no use for money; while Smith systematically calculated his resources, and contracted his wants rigidly within the

reach of his means. Brown was without system in every thing; Smith did nothing but by rule, and was as strict an economist of his time as of his money. Brown was negligent of personal appearance, even to slovenliness; while Smith was in cleanliness, neatness and attention to the proprieties of dress, a perfect model; and seemed to make the purity of his person, and even of his clothing, an index of the purity of his mind. Brown was in mixed company often silent and absent; Smith entered readily into the views and conversation of those around him with the ease of a man of the world. Their long and intimate intercourse tended to assimilate them in some of these particulars, and in none more than in the necessary attention to personal appearance and propriety of dress. They were both journalizers, or recorders of the passing events of their lives, their studies, their thoughts and their actions; but in this as in other things, Brown was fitful and irregular, while Smith was uniform, diligent and orderly.

A great source of pleasure and improvement to Charles during his residence in New York was a literary society, formed before his first visit, which under the humble appellation of "the Friendly Club," continued for several years to meet weekly at the house of one or other of the

members, to discuss literary or other subjects; and occupied part of the time in conducting a review. The members of this club were Wm. Johnson, esq.; Dr. Edward Miller; the Rev. Dr. Samuel Miller; Dr. S. L. Mitchell; James Kent, Esq.; Anthony Bleecher, esq.; Dr. E. H. Smith; Charles Adams, esq.; John Wells, esq.; W. W. Woolsey, esq.; C. B. Brown, and the writer. With most of the members of the Friendly Club, Brown was in the habits of the strictest intimacy, and enjoyed their society unreservedly on other occasions, as well as the stated times of periodical meeting.

In his journals, Brown frequently mentions the meetings of the Club. On one occasion he has these words: "Last evening spent with the clubbists at K.'s. Received from the candour of K. a severe castigation for the crimes of disputatiousness and dogmatism. Hope to profit by the lesson that he taught me."

His journals of this time are interspersed with plans and scraps of Utopias, which are left in so unfinished a situation as to be unintelligible. In common with many ardent minds filled with a love of their fellow-creatures, he sought for some plan by which to improve and secure human happiness. Many delightful visions floated in his imagination, and their traces will be per-

ceived in the portions of his early writings now presented to the public; but these schemes were none of them evér so arranged as to produce a complete or finished work.

Previously to my becoming acquainted with Brown, he had visited Bethlehem and Nazareth, and rambled on foot over the adjacent country. He had likewise visited Connecticut, and made acquaintance with many of the friends of his beloved Elihu H. Smith. Of these journeys I have no memorials except scanty and unsatisfactory notices, which will be the more regretted by the reader, after perusing the following account of an excursion to Rockaway with two friends, written in the form of a letter, and first published in the Literary Magazine.

"DEAR R.

"What possible amusement can you expect from *my* recital of a jaunt to Rockaway? I cannot dignify trifles, or give to vulgar sights a novelty, by making them pass through my fancy. That fancy, you well know, has no particle of kindred to that of poet or painter, and nobody should pretend to describe, who does not look through the optics of either painter or poet. Besides, my ignorance circumscribes my curiosity. I have few objects of remembrance with which

to compare the objects that I meet with. Hence, as the carriage whirls along, faces, fences, houses, barns, cultivated fields, pass rapidly across my eye, without leaving a vestige behind them. You will of course ask me, how the fields are inclosed? how they are planted? what portion is tilled? what is wood, and what is waste? Of what number, materials, dimensions, and form are the dwellings, the granaries, the churches, the bridges, the carriages? What is the countenance, the dress, the deportment of the passengers, and so forth? through an endless catalogue of interrogatories.

"Now I cannot answer a word to all these questions. *Your* attention, on the contrary, during such a journey would be incessantly alive; you would take exact note of all these particulars, and draw from them a thousand inferences as to the nature of the soil, the state of agriculture, and the condition of the people. While your companions were beguiling the time by a map: by looking eagerly forward to the baiting place, and asking the driver now and then, how many miles he had to go to dinner, or cursing the dust, the heat, the jostling, and the hard benches, and conversing with each other, all your senses, and your whole soul would be chained to passing objects. Not a stone would

you meet with, but would instantly pass through your crucible; not a tree or a post, but would serve as a clue to the knowledge of the soil, climate, and the industry of the island. You would count the passengers, take an inventory of their dress, mark their looks and their steps; you would calculate the length, breadth, and height of all the buildings; and compare every thing you saw, from the church to the pig-pen, and from the parson to the plough-boy, with all that you had seen elsewhere.

"Such is the traveller, my friend, that you would have made; and you would have known more of Long-Island in a few hours, than many who have lived within sight of it these fifty years:—I, alas! am one of those whom fifty years of observation would leave in the same ignorance in which they found me.

"'Tis true, as you say, that such an unobservant wretch as I represent myself to be, may yet amuse by relating his own sensations; and his narrative, if it give no account of the scene of his journey, will, at least, comprise a picture of his own character. An accurate history of the thoughts and feelings of any man, for one hour, is more valuable to some minds than a system of geography; and you, you tell me, are one of those who would rather travel into the

mind of a ploughman, than into the interior of Africa. I confess myself of your way of thinking; but from very different motives. I must needs say I would rather consort for ever with a ploughman, or even with an old Bergen market-woman, than expose myself to an hundredth part of the perils which beset the heels of a Ledyard or a Parke.

"You see how ingeniously I put off this unpleasant task; but since you will not let me off, I must begin. Remember, it is a picture of myself, and not of the island, that you want; and such, how disreputable soever it may be to the painter, you shall have. I have some comfort in thinking, that most of the travellers to Rockaway, are but little wiser and more inquisitive than myself.

"In the first place, then, we left I.'s at one o'clock. The day was extremely fine, and promised a most pleasant ride. You may suppose that we were most agreeably occupied in the prospect of a journey which neither of the three had ever made before: but no such thing. We thought and talked of nothing but the uncertainty of getting seats in the stage, which goes at that hour from Brooklynn, and the reasonable apprehension of being miserably crowded, even if we could get seats. Such is my aversion to being

wedged with ten or twelve in a stage coach, that I had previously resolved to return, in case of any such misfortune. So I told my friends; but in this I fibbed a little, for the naked truth was, that I wanted a pretext for staying behind; having left society in New York, the loss of which all the pleasures of Rockaway would poorly compensate.

"We passed the river, and after dining at the inn, were seated in the coach much more at our ease than we had any reason to expect. We rode through a country altogether new to me, twelve or fourteen miles (I forget which) to Jamaica. Shall I give you a peep into my thoughts? I am half ashamed to admit you, but I will deal sincerely with you. Still, say I, my consolation is, that few travellers, if their minds were laid as completely open to inspection, would come off from their trial with more credit than myself.

"I confess to you, then, that my mind was much more busily engaged in reflecting on the possible consequences of coming off without several changes of clothes in my handkerchief, and without an umbrella to shelter me from sunshine and rain, than with the fields and woods which I passed through. My umbrella I had the ill luck to break as we crossed the river; and as to clothes, I had the folly, as usual, to forget

that Rockaway was a place of fashionable resort, and that many accidents might happen to prolong our stay there four or five days, instead of a single day; and yet think not that I was totally insensible to passing objects. The sweet pure country air, which was brisk, cool and fresh enough to make supportable the noon-tide rays of a July sun, to the whole force of which my seat beside the driver exposed me, I inhaled with delight. I remember little, however, but a country, pretty much *denuded of its woods*, (as Sam. Johnson would say) a sandy soil; stubble fields, houses fifty years old, a couple of miles from each other; and most of them, especially those farthest on the road, exact counterparts of such as we see in Dutch and Flemish landscapes; four-wheeled rustic carriages, of a most disproportioned length, crazy and uncouth, without springs, entered from behind, and loaded with women and children, pigs and chickens; not a single carriage of elegance or pleasure to be met with, though overtaken by half a dozen gigs, going to the same place with ourselves.

"We reached Jamaica at five o'clock, and here we staid one hour. A glass of lemonade, a plentiful ablution in cold water, and a walk with B. in a church-yard opposite the inn, were all the surprising events which distinguished this hour.

This island is one of the oldest of European settlements in North America, and we therefore expected to find in this church-yard some memorial of ancient days, but we were disappointed. There were many grave-stones, broken or half sunken, or blackened by age, but the oldest date was within forty years. The church, though painted anew and furbished up lately, was about seventy years old, as an inscription on the front informed us. There was another of a much more antique cast within view, but we did not approach it.

"I hope you will be sparing of your questions respecting Jamaica, for I can answer none of them. I asked not a single question statistical or topographical of our hostess. I did not count the houses, and therefore can form no notion of the population. It is a spacious, well-looking village, many of whose houses appear to be built as summer retreats for wealthy citizens, and that is all I can say of it.

"During our second stage, I was placed much more at my ease than during the first. I was seated beside a pretty little girl, whom all the company took care to inform that they thought her pretty. For my part, her attractions made little impression on my fancy. To be infirmly delicate in form, to have a baby-like innocence

of aspect, and a voice so very soft that it can scarcely be heard, are no recommendations to me. She prattled a good deal about a squirrel and canary-bird which she had at home, and that respectful attention was paid to a pair of very sweet *lips*, which the *words* that fell from them would never have obtained. The rest of our company were men, and I have not wit enough to extract any oddity or singularity from their conversation or appearance. Two of them, you know, were my companions, and the other two cheerful and well-bred strangers.

"I, for the most part, was mute, as I usually am, in a stage-coach and among strangers. Not so my two friends. B. finds a topic of talk and good humour in every thing, and J.'s amenity is always ready to pursue the other's lead. I forget all their topics, except a very earnest discussion of the merits of different lodging-houses, at the sea-side, and many sympathetic effusions, drawn forth by the *shipwreck* of another coach. On the first head we concluded to go to the house nearest the sea, one Ben Cornwall's, our purpose being as much to gratify the eye as the touch, and there we accordingly arrived, pretty late on a chill, moist and cloudy evening.

"There are few men who are always masters of their spirits, and mine, which had not been

high through the day, fell suddenly some degrees lower, on stepping out of the carriage into the piazza of the house. This place appeared, at the first glance, to want at the same time the comforts and seclusion of a private house, and the order and plenty of a public one. The scene without was extremely dreary, and the vicinity of the sea, not being a quarter of a mile distant, gave us very distinctly the music of his multitudinous waves.

"Our curiosity would not allow us to go to bed, till we had touched the ocean wave. We, therefore, after a poor repast, hastened down to the beach. Between the house and the water, is a wide and level expanse of loose white sand, which is a pretty good sample of Arabia or Zaara, as I have heard them described. Tell me, you who have travelled, whether every country, in the temperate zone, of moderate extent and somewhat diversified, contains not samples of every quarter of the globe?

"The air was wet to the touch and saline to the taste, but the novelty of the scene, which a canopy of dark clouds, with a pale star gleaming now and then through the crevices, tended to increase, buoyed up my spirits to their usual pitch. To my friend B. this novelty was absolute. He never before saw the ocean; but

to me it was new only as I now saw it, at night. Seven years ago I found my way to the margent of the sea, between Sandyhook and the mouth of the Raritan. I took a long peregrination on foot, in company with two friends, and shall never forget the impression which the boundless and troubled ocean, seen for the first time, from an open beach, in a clear day, and with a strong wind blowing landward, made upon me! It was flood-tide, and the sandy margin formed a pretty steep shelf. The billows, therefore, rose to a considerable height, and broke with great fury against it; and my soul was suspended for half an hour, with an awe, a rapture which I never felt before. Far different were my feelings on *this* occasion, for the sea was no longer new to me, and the scene itself was far less magnificent. There was scarcely any wind; the tide was ebb, and the shore declined almost imperceptibly.

"As we came to this place for the purpose of bathing, and had so short a time to stay, we thought we could not begin too early, and therefore stript immediately, notwithstanding the freshness of the air, and what is of greater moment, our ignorance of the shore.

"Up, pretty high upon the shore, is a house, no better than a fisherman's hut. 'Tis a mere

frame of wood, boarded at the sides and top, with no window, and a door-way. The floor is sand, and there are pegs against the wall to hang clothes upon. There is a tub provided for cleansing the feet from the sand, which when wet clings to the skin like bird-lime. Towels, which are furnished at the house, we brought not with us.

"Is there any thing, the advantages of which are more universally and constantly manifested, than order? Its value is seen in the most trivial matters, as in the most momentous. This room was pitch dark, and we were wholly unacquainted with it: and yet by the simple process of hanging our clothes, as we take them off, on a peg, and putting them on in the same order reversed, there is no difficulty. Some of us were not so wise as to practice this order, and, of consequence, were condemned to grope about half an hour longer than others, in the dark, for stockings, sleeve-buttons, hats, and handkerchiefs.

"What would physicians say to standing naked on a bleak night, with the wind at east, while the billows broke over you for ten minutes? There is an agreeable trepidation felt, while the scene is new, and the sudden effusion of cold water must, methinks, produce powerful effects of some kind or another.

"As we were early comers to this house, we were honoured each with a room to himself. There were twenty or thirty persons to be accommodated, besides a numerous family, in a wooden house of two stories; so that we could not but congratulate ourselves on the privilege thus secured to us. The chamber, however, allotted to me was a little nook, about seven feet long and three wide, only large enough to admit the bedstead and him that slept in it. In such excursions as these, however, hardships and privations are preferable to ease and luxury. There is something like consciousness of merit in encountering them voluntarily and with cheerfulness. There is a rivalship in hardihood and good humour, more pleasurable than any delights of the senses. A splenetic or fastidious traveller is a great burden to himself and to his company, and ought, through mere generosity, to keep himself at home. In saying this, I am conscious, that in some degree, I pronounce my own condemnation, but I hope I am not very culpable.

"My friends rose at day-light next morning, and went to bathe. They gave me warning, but I heeded it not. My little nook had half melted me with heat, and I felt as if unqualified for the least exertion. I was sorry to have lost the opportunity, and rose, when the sun was high

in the heavens, with some degree of regret. But more lucky than I deserved to be, I found a country waggon at the door, ready to carry down any one that chose, to the strand. I went down with another.

" This was a far different bathing from that of the night before. The waggon carries us to the water's edge, and there we may undress at our leisure amidst a footing of clean straw, convenient seats and plenty of napkins. The waggon receives us directly from the water, and carries us home without trouble or delay. On this occasion the sun was just warm enough to be comfortable, and the time o'day exactly suited to the bath. Such is my notion of the matter, but I doubt whether any body else will agree with me. Sun-rise and sun-set are the usual bathing times.

After breakfast, we took a walk along the strand. My pastime consisted in picking up shells; in sifting and examining the fine white sand; in treading on the heels and toes of the wave, as it fell and rose, and in trying to find some music in its eternal murmur. Here could I give you long descants on all these topics, but my vague and crude reveries would only make my dull epistle still more dull. The sun at last broke out with the full force of midsummer, and

we panted and waded through the sand, homeward, with no small regret that we had ventured so far. We Americans in general have feeble heads: those of us, I mean, who were not born to dig ditches and make hay. A white hat, broad-brimmed, and light as a straw, is an insufficient shelter against the direct beams of the sun. What must we have suffered on this occasion when the vertical rays fell on a surface of smooth white sand? We were almost liquefied before we reached the house.

"The company, at this house was numerous, and afforded, as usual, abundant topics of speculation. Some were young men, in the hey-day of spirits, rattling, restless, and noisy. Some were solid and conversible, and some awkward and reserved. Three ladies, married women, belonged to the company: one of whom said nothing, but was as dignified and courteous in demeanour as silence would let her be: another talked much, and a third hit the true medium pretty well. I did not fail to make a great many reflections on the passing scene, which, together with a volume of Cecilia, made the day pass not very tediously.

"My friends always carry books with them, even when they go abroad for a few hours. One of them to day produced the Maxims of La

Bruyere; the other, those of Rochefoucault; and some minutes were consumed in decypher-ing and commenting on these. But the subject which engrossed most attention in the morning, was a plan for procuring a dozen of claret for the embellishment of dinner: and the return of man and chaise without the claret for which they had been sent to a distant tavern, cast a great damp upon the spirits of most of us. We got rid of the afternoon pretty easily, by giving an hour or two to the bottle, and the rest to the *siesta*. As to our talk at dinner, there was per-fect good humour, and a good deal of inclination to be witty; but I do not recollect a single *good thing* that deserves to be recorded; and my powers do not enable me to place the common-place characters around me in an interesting or amusing point of view. As to myself, I am never at home—never in my element at such a place as this. A thousand nameless restraints encum-ber my speech and my limbs; and I cannot even listen to others with a gay, unembarrassed mind. Towards evening it began to rain; and not only imprisoned us for the present, but gave us some apprehensions of a detention here for a week: a detention, which, for many reasons, one of which I have already mentioned, would have proved extremely disagreeable to me.

"My friend, I have grown very tired of my story. I believe I will cut short the rest, and carry you back with me, next morning, to New York, in a couple of sentences. The weather on the morrow was damp and lowering, but it cleared up early. We were again agreeably disappointed in our expectations of a crowded stage; and, after breakfasting at Jamaica, reached town at one o'clock. On my return, I was just as unobservant of the passing scene as before, and took as little note of the geography of the isle. Set me out on the same journey again, and I should scarcely recognise a foot of the way. I saw trees, and shrubs, and grasses; but I could not name them, *being as how* I am no botanist.

"Perhaps, however, I mistake the purpose of such journies; which is not to exercise the reasoning faculties, or to add to knowledge; but to unbend—to dissipate thought and care, and to strengthen the frame, and refresh the spirits, by mere motion and variety. This is the language which my friends hold; but I confess, mere mental vacuity gives me neither health nor pleasure. To give time wings, my attention must be fixed on something:—I must look about me in pursuit of some expected object;—I must converse with my companion on some reasonable topic;—I must find some image in my own

fancy to examine, or the way is painfully tedious. This jaunt to Rockaway has left few agreeable traces behind it. All I remember with any pleasure, are the appearance of the wide ocean, and the incidents of bathing in its surges. Had I been a botanist, and lighted upon some new plant—a mineralogist, and found an agate or a petrifaction—a naturalist, and caught such a butterfly as I never saw before—I should have reflected on the journey with no little satisfaction. As it was, I set my foot in the city with no other sentiment, but that of regret, for not having employed these two days in a very different manner."

The incidents here so pleasantly recorded are extremely trivial, but the whole serves to develope the character of the man, and as is observed by a friend when writing on the subject which now occupies me, "*in the life of a literary* man character is biography." The same friend thus pursues the subject: "How can it be expected that the life can be embellished by splendid incident, when the very profession of the man allows of no other than what passes while seated in solitude at his writing-desk. When existence is devoted to pensive musing, are we called upon to create incidents?—or must it be what it professes to be, a biography of intellect merely? If we

examine this subject more rigidly, it will be found that these employments, the reception, and the answering of letters, the recital of friendship and antipathies, and the thousand nameless anxieties which a solitary being enjoys, or suffers, are themselves the incidents in the life of a literary man. In comparison with these, the time when a book was published of which he was the author, the profits of the bookseller on the publication of the work, how heavily the first edition went off, and the rapidity with which it was succeeded by the remainder, are nothing, literally nothing. Incidents themselves, and those of the most extraordinary cast, do not always point to character. An artificial character is often assumed, and incidents favourable to its establishment are employed, when, if the life of a man were determined by this standard, a coward would appear in the habiliments of heroism, and a knave in the garb of honesty. It is only when life appears in what may be denominated its undress, when there is no motive to wear a mask, that the genuine character of man can be discerned. The incidents of a literary existence must be such as are connected with that mode of being. If the life of such a man passes in the solitude of his closet, and is no otherwise diminished than by variegated studies, we say nothing more in

fact, than that he was a literary man. Why should we annex the word *incident*, merely to some marvellous occurrence such only as the traveller or the warrior encounters? It is impossible that life can pass without incident with any being who inherits common-sense. There must be a change of thought, what Johnson pompously calls a cession and retrocession of intellect. These are incidents; these are the means by which this solitary being is enabled to build a name for the admiration of future ages. They constitute the very materials with which his works are constructed; and by these, if the above objection has any validity, we are led to expect that a man would write a novel, or compose a poem in the same manner in which he would win a battle. That portion of time detached from what the world vulgarly denominates *incident*, is therefore the precise period which it is the duty of a biographer to display. Had his hero been engaged in the contests of the field, or of the bar, then indeed might the public look with propriety for incidents of another sort. But such is not the employment of a writer; solitude alone furnishes him with appropriate incident. Whatever other adventures might befal him if he should mingle in a battle, or the bustling avocations of life, so far would the rela-

tion of such circumstances lead the public astray, as to his reputation as a writer. The *incidents* of an author, are his ideas, and those who look for more than these in the history of an author, must expect to find what they deserve—disappointment. I know it has been often triumphantly said, even by those who admire an author's work, what can the life of such a man afford us? It is merely a life barren of *incident*, as his own works, from the labour with which they are constructed, will abundantly testify. Now, had this intellectual labour eventuated in the erection of a pyramid, or in the accomplishment of a victory, they would expect to derive amusement from the biography of such a man; but still as he has only produced a book which they themselves admire more than they would do either the one or the other, his life, or more properly the history of the means by which another was able to execute a work so important, becomes entirely insignificant. And why is this difference? Because the one is perhaps accomplished by manual labour merely—the *brute labour* and perhaps the predominant mind which directed the work in every stage of its progress, had not been engaged in the erection of the massy marble. Yet allow that the man who had planned the pyramid, or the victory, should him-

self have mingled with the labours, the probability is that he would have been able to have executed what he had so ingeniously designed. What mankind can see and feel, when the minds of others in the hands of an architect begin to assume a visible, tangible, and permanent shape, this they are disposed to admire; but had these very persons read how such a pyramid could be erected, or such a battle achieved, they would probably have laughed at the author as an idle visionary, unworthy of regard. And yet this very pyramid, or this very battle, would have been a practical comment on the justice of this despised author's remarks. Incident, then, so far as it is connected with our present purpose, means fairly this—a dispassionate recital of the thoughts which passed in the mind of Brown. It does not mean, and it cannot mean, that he should have been personally engaged in those marvellous adventures which his pen afterwards describes; for had he *acted in those characters*, he never would have been the *author* of such works."

Ever fond of analysis, Charles, even in very early life, would take no opinion upon trust. He found in his own mind abundant reason to reject many of the received opinions of mankind, and to doubt the reality of many facts upon which

those opinions are founded. Much of his reading at this time tended to bewilder, rather than enlighten, and to confirm his predisposition to scepticism. In common with many others, he imputed to wrong causes the defects which are but too apparent in existing systems. He saw the wrong, and injustice, and evil, which exist; and instead of attributing them to the ignorance and selfishness of individuals, he assigned as the cause, the errors or inefficiency of those codes which are intended to enlighten or to restrain.

A principle, with him, was sacred in proportion as it accorded with his preconceived sensations: and these sensations, as has been already abundantly seen, were ardently romantic. Whatever of defect was discernible in existing systems, he imputed to the wrong cause; which was to some inherent ineffectiveness in the system itself, and not to the depravity of our common nature, so capable of perverting the best systems to the worst of purposes. That all human systems are fallible, is saying nothing more than that they were not all the workmanship of our munificent Creator. But Charles took other ground: in the overflowing philanthropy of his heart, he was prone to believe that all these injurious consequences were imputable to the laws of the land. Finding a defect in the law, when

vigorously analysed, and that man continued to perpetrate outrages against it, he thought too often that these were imputable to the law itself. Hence, in many of his earlier speculations, he reasons upon what mankind would not do, had not such authority interposed its injunction. His feelings, warmed as they always were by human sufferings, aided this deception, until he imputes to the law itself the creation of those very evils which it was designed most assiduously to guard against. To this he might probably have been led by the perusal of history. Tyrants have existed, undoubtedly; and all authority may be called tyranny, if the dreams of a visionary are allowed the force and authority of law.

Hence the ardour with which he speaks, unless the peculiarity of his character is known—unless his warm and sublimated fancy—his intense feelings—are taken into consideration, will need an apology. Fortunately, it may be found, as has been proved by the letters already given, in the excellence of his heart. And it is not an uninteresting speculation to observe, how those plunging tenets and dangerous doctrines which he advanced, in his first entry into public life, become gradually contracted as he mingles with men, and observes human manners. Subtleties that may be defended by an able logician in a

thousand different ways, are abandoned when he sees them brought to the test of experiment, and fail.

To give the reader a more detailed account, extracts from a work, entitled "ALCUIN," written in the fall and winter of the year 1797, will be found subjoined to this sketch. They consist of some ingenious speculations on the subject of the matrimonial institution; intermixed with sophistry and visionary enthusiasm.

It was deemed proper to give a full and front view of such speculations, to show the arguments which ingenious sophistry might urge against any existing establishment, and at the same time, how little mankind will be benefited by the substitute recommended as a cure for such evils. That imperfection is written on the features of humanity, is certainly a discovery which has no claim to novelty. If we consider the operation of a law, merely to discover what instances of partial injustice may arise, and overlook all the benefits resulting from its adoption, nothing is easier than to point out such defects. With the aid of eloquence nothing is easier than to represent such defects of gigantic magnitude, and sufficiently forcibly that they may be thought to warrant the repeal of such a law. But when such ingenuity is pressed upon this point to pro-

vide a substitute for what it demolishes, it commonly terminates in an evil, ten-fold more alarming than what has been so violently declaimed against. The misery of such speculations is, that their projectors do not see the end of their own arguments. The sanctity of the matrimonial tie, may give rise to instances of partial injustice and oppression for which the law has provided a remedy. If these instances are urged as valid objections against matrimony, they may be made to appear formidable and convincing;—but the alternative proposed is, indiscriminate intercourse. It is made dependent on the will of the parties, their caprices, their jealousies and their antipathies, reasonable or unreasonable, which they themselves would be the first to condemn afterwards, when they shall unite and when they shall separate.

Had the proposition thus advanced by this writer been stated to him as a substitute for the ceremonial solemnities now in use, he would have been the first to have anathematised the introduction of such dangerous novelties. He would have rejected the amendment to the matrimonial code at once: for none entertained higher ideas of the sanctity of such obligations, than this very author. But, following his own speculations, intent only on finding fault with

existing establishments, in order to make himself consistent in the sequel, he is compelled to plunge headlong into the very difficulty he would have wished most sedulously to avoid. Such is the fate of those who let speculation loose without discretion. They are compelled to justify what in heart they abhor, and to defend enormities that shock their moral sense, before they are conscious of their being pressed into such service. It is now too late to retreat, and the error must be fairly brazened out, or what is still worse, it must be admitted by the speculatists themselves, that they harboured wrong ideas on the subject. It is curious to observe how the zeal of Charles in this inquiry relaxes, as soon as he states the substitute. He feels the press of the difficulty, and not knowing how to abandon the subject in the first place, or to maintain it in the next, abruptly concludes his argument altogether.

This silence, this guardedness, this expressive caution, introduced at the very moment that the author is substituting a remedy for all the evils which he declaims so eloquently against, is perhaps the best comment on the impracticability of his amendment. The author seems to abandon his own project in disgust, and while he is; when writing, forcibly impressed with the

miseries attending our present mode of solemnizing the matrimonial rite, he seems equally convinced that it is better to tolerate those, than to adopt the alternative which he himself proposes. On this subject, where it might be supposed he should lay out his whole strength, he shrinks from the investigation, and dreads the consequences that result. The substitute which he did thus propose, in all probability convinced the author himself of the sophistry of his own arguments.

Of this treatise Mr. Brown remarks in his journal, "I have completed a third and fourth part of the dialogue of Alcuin, in which the topic of marriage is discussed with some degree of subtlety, at least."

He then goes on to speak of a romance which he began at this time, but never finished.

"When this was finished, I commenced something in the form of a romance. I had at first no definitive conception of my design. As my pen proceeded forward, my invention was tasked, and the materials that it afforded were arranged and digested. Fortunately I continued to view this scheme in the same light in which it had at first presented itself. Time therefore did not diminish its attractions. The facility I experienced in composition, and the perception of

daily progress encouraged me; and my task was finished on the last day of December.

"I hardly know how to regard this exploit. Is it a respectable proof of perseverance or not? Considering my character in its former appearances, this steadiness of application might not have been expected. What is the nature or merit of my performance? This question is not for me to answer. My decision is favourable or otherwise, according to the views which I take of the subject. When a mental comparison is made between this and the mass of novels, I am inclined to be pleased with my own production. But when the objects of comparison are changed, and I revolve the transcendent merits of Caleb Williams, my pleasure is diminished, and is preserved from a total extinction only by the reflection that this performance is the first; that every new attempt will be better than the last, and that considered in the light of a prelude or first link, it may merit that praise to which it may possess no claim, considered as a last best creation.*

* The work here alluded to was never finished. A series of letters constituting all that the author completed of this intended romance, is printed in the collection just published, entitled, "Carwin and other American Tales, and Pieces, by C. B. Brown, author of Wieland, &c."

"It was at first written in a hasty and inaccurate way. Before I can submit it to a printer, or even satisfactorily rehearse it to a friend, it must be wholly transcribed. I am at present engaged in this employment. I am afraid as much time will be required by it as was necessary to the original composition. I do not fear but I shall finish my labour, barring all extraordinary accidents."

In the year 1793, Mr. Brown had seen the desolation of his native city by that pestilence which is known by the name of yellow-fever. His father's family, his brethren and himself were among those who fled in time to avoid its influence, and to escape the necessity of witnessing those scenes of loathsome misery which distinguished that disease. But in 1798, Charles, by remaining in New York until too late to fly, either with safety or propriety, was made an inmate of the disease, beheld it in its most horrid forms, and saw expiring the victims of its irresistible power, men as much distinguished for their talents and acquirements as for every virtue which can dignify our nature.

The city of New York had been visited several years in succession by the pestilence, but its inhabitants flattered themselves each year that the afflictions of the foregoing would not be renewed.

Many, however, removed with their families each summer into the country. Among this number was the writer, and Mr. Brown had frequently been his guest at Perth Amboy on such occasions. At this period he was pleasantly situated with his friends Smith and Johnson, and when the rumour of the yellow-fever having again broke out in certain quarters of the town reached him, he was persuaded that as their neighbourhood was free from infection, they were safe.

In a letter to his brother James, dated the twenty-fifth of August, 1798, after mentioning his literary plans, for he was then preparing to publish "Wieland," and the project of a Magazine for his profit had been suggested; he concludes thus: "Heavy rains, uncleansed sinks, and a continuance of unexampled heat, have within these ten days, given birth to the yellow-fever among us, in its epidemical form. Death and alarms have rapidly multiplied, but it is hoped that now, as formerly, its influence will be limited to one place. You may be under no concern on my account, since my abode is far enough from the seat of the disease, and my mode of living, from which animal food and spirituous liquors are wholly excluded, gives the utmost security."

This plan was in accordance to the theory of

his friend Smith, who rigidly practised it himself at all times. Brown had much reason to rely upon the judgment of Smith, but if he did not feel that perfect security which his letter avows, he assumed the tone for the purpose of quieting the apprehensions of his friends.

On the 4th of September he writes thus to his brother James, justifying his continuance in New York.

"When did you learn to rely upon rumour and newspaper information? As to the state of this city, you might naturally suspect that it would be misrepresented and exaggerated. There is abundance of alarm, and the streets most busy and frequented will speedily be evacuated. As to the malignity of this disease, perhaps its attack is more violent than ordinary, but E. H. S. to whom I read your letter, answers for me that not more than one out of nine, when properly nursed, die; and that its fatality therefore, is much less than the same disease in Philadelphia.

"In the present healthful state of this neighbourhood it would be absurd to allow fear to drive me away. When there is actual and indisputable danger it would be no less absurd to remain, since even if the disease terminate favour-

ably, or even were certain so to terminate, we are sure of being infinitely troublesome to others and of undergoing much pain. E. H. S. has extensive and successful practice in this disease. Through fatigue and exposure to midnight airs, he is at present somewhat indisposed, but will shortly do well. If, when this fever attacks our neighbourhood I run away, I am not sure that I shall do right. E. H. S. at least, probably Johnson, will remain, at all events; and if I run the risk of requiring to be nursed, I must not forget that others may require to be nursed by me, in a disease where personal attentions are *all in all.*"

I trust that I need not remark upon the truth of the above sentiment, or call the reader's attention to the high point of view in which it places Mr. Brown's character. The letters which at this time he wrote to his brother James were in answer to earnest entreaties of his family that he would fly from New York as they had done from Philadelphia, where the pestilence raged with equal malignity.

A few days after he writes thus:—

"This pestilential air seems to be extending itself to all quarters. Things here wear a very gloomy aspect. Pearl and Water Streets are

wholly desolate, and all business is at a stand. The lowest computation supposes one-half of the inhabitants to have fled. Notwithstanding this depopulation, especially in the most infected spots, I am sorry to add that the malignity increases, and the number of deaths.

"The atmosphere is perceptibly different from former years, and leaves nobody in perfect health, but the quarter where I reside is still free from sickness. All the physicians who have at all attended patients in this fever have been indisposed. Our friend E. H. S.'s indisposition has nearly gone, but he ascribes his preservation from death entirely to his vegetable diet and his refusing his attendance at the beginning of his complaint, to the summons of the sick. He is now nearly able to resume the medical functions. Five physicians much conversant with the sick have died within a very short space."

On Tuesday the 12th of September, while the ravages and malignity of the pest were hourly increasing, and Dr. Smith had just regained strength to lend again his aid to the accumulating sufferers, an interesting stranger arrived from the equally pestilential city of Philadelphia, whose fate and its consequences, brought the desolation, in its most fearful form, home to the domestic

establishment of the three friends, Johnson, Smith and Brown.

Joseph B. Scandella was a native of the Venetian state. Of an opulent and distinguished family, he had been educated as a physician, but had devoted his faculties to general improvement in science. He left home early in life for this purpose, and visited England as secretary to the Venetian embassy. From thence his attention was called to our growing empire in the West; and to a liberal curiosity and ardent mind, no country on earth could be so attractive as that where the great experiment of an almost boundless federative republic had already made such progress as seemed to defy every effort of ignorance and malice to frustrate it.

He first visited the English provinces. When in the United States, he made various journies in every direction, particularly bending his attention to the southern and western districts, where agriculture, the foundation of national wealth, is extending with such rapid strides, the happiness of an independent yeomanry, and erecting an empire which must necessarily correct, by its influence upon their interests, the tendency to corruption and European political bias in the maritime states.

After a residence of two years in the United

States, Dr. Scandella prepared to return, and in the month of June embarked at the port of Philadelphia. The vessel proved unfit for a sea voyage and returned to port. He then came to New York and took passage in a packet from this port to Falmouth. Here he renewed an acquaintance begun in Philadelphia with Dr. E. H. Smith. The detention of his baggage by some accident occasioned him to lose this opportunity of embarkation, and while awaiting another the yellow-fever broke out in both cities. Notwithstanding its more early progress and greater malignity in Philadelphia, his concern for the welfare of an amiable family of helpless females, a widowed mother and her daughters, induced him to return to that city. He witnessed the death of every individual of the family.

After enduring the continual loss of rest, and exposing himself to the influence of an infected atmosphere for ten days, he set out on his return to New York, and in crossing the causeway between Newark and this place first felt the deadly disease upon him. He arrived in the evening at the Tontine Coffee-House, and knowing the necessity of a lodging as much as possible removed from the heartlessness of a hotel, he exerted himself to procure admittance at the various boarding-houses, but terror steeled every

heart, and shut every door against the sick stranger. The benevolent Smith heard of his arrival, sought him instantly, and found him, under the influence of the pestilence, in bed at the Coffee-House. He removed him to his room, resigned him to his bed, and became his physician and nurse.

On Sunday morning the 17th of September, Brown writes thus to his brother :—

" When calamity is at a distance it affects us but little, and no sympathy for others can realize that distress which does not immediately affect us. You have discovered by the public papers the deplorable condition of our city, which in fact exceeds that of Philadelphia, inasmuch as the mortality bears a greater proportion to the population with us. Another circumstance greatly enhances our calamity, for the victims to this disease have been in innumerable cases, selected from the highest and most respectable class of inhabitants. Till lately, horrible as this evil is, and much conversant with it through the medium of physicians as I had been, I was not much affected by it until, during the last week, this fatal pest has encompassed us and entered our own doors.

" On Tuesday last, an Italian gentleman of

great merit and a particular friend of E. H. S. arrived in this city from Philadelphia. The disease had already been contracted, and admission into the boarding-houses was denied him. Hearing of his situation our friend hastened to his succour, and resigned to him his own bed. A nurse was impossible to be procured, and this duty therefore devolved upon us. Many moral incidents concurred to render this a most melancholy case. The disease was virulent beyond example, but his agonies have been protracted to this day. He now lies in one apartment of our house, a spectacle that sickens the heart to behold, and not far from his last breath, while, in the next, our friend E. H. S. is in a condition but little better.

"Extreme fatigues and anxieties could not fail of producing a return of this disease in Elihu. How it will end Heaven knows.

"Sunday evening. Our Italian friend is dead, and Elihu is preparing to be transported to ——s, whose house is spacious, healthfully situated, and plentifully accommodated. Our own house is a theatre of death and grief, where his longer continuance would infallibly destroy him and us.

"Before his last attack, E. H. S. became sensible of the disproportionate hazard which he incurred, and had determined as soon as his friend Scandella had recovered or perished, and his pre-

sent patients had been got rid of, to withdraw from town."

Brown had been himself attacked by the first symptoms of the fatal disease, and was removed to the house of the same friend who now received the unfortunate Smith. Brown's symptoms yielded to medicine, not so his friend's; he lingered a few days in a state allied to stupor; the efforts of his medical friends Miller and Mitchill were utterly unavailing; he saw the last symptom of disease, black vomit, pronounced the word "decomposition," and died.

Thus perished, on Wednesday the twenty-first of September, 1798, in the twenty-seventh year of his age, Elihu Hubbard Smith; a man whose whole ambition was to increase his intellectual powers with a view of devoting them to his fellow men.

In the Medical Repository, a work of which he was one of the most zealous founders, and which was conducted after his death by his friends Miller and Mitchill, appeared a few lines devoted to his memory, from which I will indulge myself by repeating to the public the testimony of the enlightened writers:

"There are few who perished during that calamitous season, whose fate excited more universal regret, and whose memory will be more

fondly and permanently cherished than Elihu H. Smith. In his domestic relations, the knowledge of his excellence was necessarily confined to few; but by those few, his conduct as a son and a brother will ever be regarded as a model of unblemished rectitude. Indefatigable in the promotion of the true interest of those allied to him, a casual observer would be disposed to imagine his whole attention to be absorbed by this object, and that he whose affections were so ardent, and his mind so active for their good, had no leisure for the offices of friendship, and for the pursuit of general happiness. To these valuable purposes, however, no one attended with more zeal and assiduity. To those who were blessed with his friendship (and the number was by no means small), his attachment was unwavering and his efforts for their benefit without intermission. To the cause of general happiness he devoted his abilities with no less zeal."

"His talents could not otherwise than slowly surmount the obstacles which were thrown in the way of his professional success by his youth, and by the want of patronage and support. His leisure he however devoted to the best purposes. Besides his medical pursuits, he cultivated with zeal and success, almost every branch of literature. As a physician his loss is irreparable.

He had explored, at his early age, an extent of medical learning for which the longest lives are seldom found sufficient. His diligence and activity, his ardour and perseverance, knew no common bounds. The love of science and the impulse of philanthropy, directed his whole professional career, and left little room for the calculations of emolument. He had formed vast designs of medical improvements, which embraced the whole family of mankind, and were animated by the soul of benevolence."

Upon the removal of Dr. Smith from his own dwelling to the house of a friend, Mr. Brown resigned to him the chamber he had occupied in that friend's house, and by invitation removed to Dr. Miller's. Of his feelings at this time we must judge by his letters. The day before the death of his friend, he thus addresses his brother.

"What shall I write? I know that you ought to have frequent information of what is passing here, but I cannot trust myself with the narrative. My labour is to forget and exclude surrounding scenes and recent incidents.

"Smith is not dead, but unless miracles be wrought for him, another day will number him with the victims of this most dreadful and relentless of pestilences. My excellent friend Dr. Mil-

ler, dissuades me from going to you. The journey is too long, and the consequence of falling sick upon the road may be easily conceived. Here then I must remain.

"The number of physicians is rapidly declining, while that of the sick is rapidly increasing. Dr. Miller, whose practice, as his skill, exceeds that of any other physician, is almost weary of a scene of such complicated horrors. My heart sickens at the perpetual recital of which I am compelled to be an auditor, and I long to plunge myself into woods and deserts where the faintest blast of rumour may not reach me.

"Thursday morning. The die is cast. E. H. S. is dead. O the folly of prediction and the vanity of systems!

"In the opinion of Miller, the disease in no case was ever more dreadfully and infernally malignant. I am as well as circumstances will permit, and shall, as soon as possible, leave the city with William Johnson for Amboy or Connecticut."

In another letter he says, "The weather has lately changed for the better, and hopes are generally entertained that the pestilence, for so it may truly be called, will decline. As to myself, I certainly improve, though slowly, and now en-

tertain very slight apprehensions of danger to myself. Still I am anxious to leave the city. To go to Amboy and remain there for some time, will be most eligible. This calamity has endeared the survivors of the sacred fellowship, W. D., W. J. and myself to each other in a very high degree; and I confess my wounded spirit, and shattered frame, will be most likely to be healed and benefited by their society. Permit me, therefore, to decline going with you to Burlington. For a little while at least."

The next day, September twenty-fifth, Charles addressed his brother from Perth Amboy.

"It is with great pleasure, that I now inform you of my safe arrival at this place. Yesterday I wrote to you informing you of my intention to come hither on the morrow. After depositing my letter, Wm. Johnson and myself, concluded that if a water passage could readily be found to Staten Island, it would be advisable to depart immediately. This being forthwith sought for, was found. We left the city at two in the afternoon, and after a most auspicious passage arrived at Amboy at sun-set. I already feel the sensations of a new being, and am restored as it were by magic, to a tolerable degree of health and cheerfulness.

"Here I wish to stay, at least for some weeks in the enjoyment of the purest air and wholesome exercise. The change from a pestilential, desolate, and sultry city, to the odours and sprightly atmosphere of this village, is inexpressibly grateful and beneficial; and I believe you may dismiss all uneasiness, henceforth, on account of my safety. I seize this early opportunity, to inform you of my removal, because it was due to your generous concern for me."

After passing some weeks at Perth Amboy, Mr. Brown visited his family, and on the return of winter, took up his abode again in New York.

In the month of December, 1798, he thus details to his brother Armit, a plan for a Magazine.

"Eight of my friends here, men in the highest degree respectable for literature and influence, have urged me so vehemently to undertake the project of a magazine, and promised their contributions and assistance to its success, that I have written and published proposals. Four hundred subscribers will repay the annual expense of sixteen hundred dollars. As soon as this number is obtained, the printer will begin, and trust to the punctual payment of these for reimbursement. All above four hundred, will be

clear profit to me: one thousand subscribers will produce four thousand five hundred dollars, and deducting the annual expense, will leave two thousand seven hundred. If this sum be attainable, in a year or two you will allow that my prospect is consoling. The influence of my friends, and their unexpected and uncommon zeal, inspire me with a courage which I should be unable to derive from any other quarter."

This was one of the many literary schemes which now occupied the attention of Mr. Brown; for he at this time carried into effect the plan which had long been forming in his mind of becoming an author by profession; of devoting his life to book-making, and trusting his future fortunes, as well as fame, to the labours of his pen. To become exclusively an author, was at that time a novelty in the United States, and if we except the editors of newspapers, no one had relied solely upon the support of his talents as a writer, and deliberately chosen this station in society. Mr. Brown was so far successful, that he never relinquished his plan, and, if health and life had been continued to him, would have supported in competence and reared to usefulness, a numerous and amiable family.

His first publication was Alcuin, already mentioned. In 1798, he published Wieland. This

powerful and original romance, excited attention and brought the author into the notice of all readers of works of this description. Few novels or romances have been written, which seize so strongly upon the imagination and feelings of the reader, hurry him from the realities which surround him, bury in oblivion his joys or sorrows, and fix his whole attention on the images which the author presents before him, as Wieland.

In this work, the author, rejecting those events which flow from causes well known and constantly in operation, among men in society (which form the best and most useful groundwork for this species of composition), and discarding the hacknied machinery of castles, banditti and ghosts, took a new and untrodden ground. "He made the events of his story depend upon, and flow from, two of those wonderful phenomena of the moral and physical world, which, though known and established, were still mysterious and undefined; and, though vouched for by unquestionable authorities, are of such rare occurrence, as not to be familiar, or even fully accounted for. Self-combustion is an awful and mysterious phenomenon of nature. The author of Wieland, by means of an instance of the extinction of life, and bodily decomposition,

which he relates as having happened to the father of his hero, accounts for a predisposition to the reception of insane and pernicious images in the mind of Wieland. The author then calls to his aid a second mysterious and wonderful phenomenon, the existence of which is not so well attested as the first—ventriloquism: and by endowing one of his characters with this stupendous power—a power which, when once exerted, is incalculable in its effects, he excites his hero to the commission of acts, which, though they have their prototypes in authentic records, are of a character so horrible, as to border on the shocking, and in some measure defeat the end of the inventor, by lessening the attraction of the story.

Wieland, stimulated by what he considers supernatural premonition, murders his wife and children; and, finally, undeceived in part—and the high-wrought tone of feeling, which supported him under a consciousness of well-doing, and of immediate communication with Heaven, being let down by a glimpse of the truth—he commits suicide. The causes of these dreadful effects, appear supernatural until the denouement or explanation takes place.

The author had doubtless a right to assume these wonderful appearances of nature as a basis

for his fabrication. To his active imagination and fertile mind, they suggested the materials for erecting a superstructure of the greatest magnitude, and the most awful importance. Man —frail, ignorant, and dependent—is prone to superstition. In all ages, those natural phenomena, which are beyond the reach of our knowledge, have been deemed supernatural. The explosion of the electric fluid has been heard with awe—as the voice of the Creator of the Universe: and its effect upon animal life—an effect as natural as that of fever or hunger, though less common—has been called his judgment, or the immediate display of his anger. In like manner, the expansion of subterraneous gases, and the misery occasioned by their rending the surface of the earth on spots where cities have been erected, has been ascribed to the jealousy or anger of the all-benevolent God of our love and gratitude.

As the causes of these effects became known, they ceased to be thus regarded. But a phenomenon so extraordinary, and apparently contrary to the known laws of nature, as self-combustion, though easily explained to the philosopher, cannot but, even at this time, hold the mind in awful pause. The power of the biloquist, never yet explained, if it really exists, may be so used

as to produce effects, which must necessarily unhinge the mind, and force it to fall into the belief of supernatural interposition. Here Mr. Brown had possession of engines wherewith to work, of the most powerful and novel kind, and he made great use of them: but a doubt has been suggested of the propriety or policy of resorting to such tremendous agents in the conduct of a novel. It is true that they are in nature: but, to the generality of mankind, they appear more strange, if not more unnatural, than ghosts or spectres.

The instances of self-combustion, or ventriloquism*, are so rare, that a work, whose events are founded on such materials, accords less with popular feelings and credulity, than if supernatural agency had been employed†. In all ages, and in all nations, tales of ghosts, of sorcery and witches, of genii, of demons, of local deities, and of familiar spirits—in short, of communication with an invisible world of powerful and incorporeal beings—have received popular credence, and been familiar to man from his cradle to his

* It must not be supposed, that by ventriloquism, I mean the bungling trick which jugglers have called by that name.

† None of Mr. Brown's Novels are of that class which pretends merely to amuse, and is therefore addressed to "popular feelings and credulity." His aim was much higher.—Ed.

grave. When the agency of such beings is used in a poem or tale, if we do not believe, we at least are not shocked. On the other hand, to the mass of readers, the natural causes of which we are speaking, are so indefinite and so little understood, that disappointment is experienced when they are brought forward to account for appearances which the reader had previously supposed to be supernatural. It is perhaps always unsatisfactory, to find that causes which had purposely been made to convey an idea of more than mortal agency, are merely natural. The reader will remember the denouement of "the family of Montorio," and the waxen doll which inspires such high and mysterious ideas in Mrs. Radcliffe's "Mysteries of Udolpho."

Notwithstanding these strictures upon Mr. Brown's agents, the writer is disposed to class Wieland among novels of the highest order. It has a well-conducted fable, the incidents of which all tend to its progress and development; and the style is pure, strong, and eloquent.

The great cause of all the evils which befall Wieland and his family, Carwin the biloquist, is a character approaching to the sublime, from the mystery thrown around him, and yet at times inspiring sentiments of disgust, and even con-

tempt. The author does not give us the history of this personage, and thus, as was always his custom, left an opening for a continuation, or for another romance. Accordingly Mr. Brown afterwards began, and partly published "Memoirs of Carwin the Biloquist." This very interesting fragment the reader will find well worthy of perusal, and will regret that the author did not finish a work so replete with novelty and interest.*

In December of the same year in which Wieland was published, Mr. Brown wrote his novel of "Ormond, or the Secret Witness," which had not the success of Wieland, neither did it deserve it. It has been remarked that there is a strong affinity between Ormond, the hero of this work, and Falkland, in the celebrated romance of Caleb Williams. Indeed, at this period of Mr. Brown's life, he was an avowed admirer of Godwin's style, and the effects of that admiration may be discerned in many of his early compositions. It is remarked by the same writer, whose opinions I have before quoted in respect to Mr. Brown and his writings, that "Ormond and Falkland are both endeared to us on their first appearance, and while every heart is warmed by their bene-

* See "Carwin and other American Tales and Pieces, by C. B. Brown;" just published.

volence and disinterestedness, they are suddenly converted into monsters of depravity. This change so sudden and unexpected, is nevertheless reconciled to the principles laid down by these authors. Ormond and Falkland have each their separate objects, which they endeavour to obtain at first by honourable means. So long as these means are found capable of answering their purposes, the respective characters glide smoothly on, and none of their noxious features are made visible. But behind this plausible exterior of courtesy and benevolence, fiery and uncontrollable passions are raging. They burn, it is true, with a smothered fire, but both Falkland and Ormond, are incited by those very passions to do those very acts, which render them so endearing to our eyes. They have no motive to act otherwise than honourably, when they can accomplish their objects by so acting. But when they find that all these sacrifices avail them nothing, they immediately forsake this artificial character, and endeavour to obtain by dishonest means, what with honourable means they could not accomplish.

The apparent incredulity attached to the existence of such characters results from the sudden turn of events by which these changes are brought about. The character takes its complexion from

these events; as long as they are favourable, we admire and respect; and when unfavourable, we abhor.

Thus Ormond labours to overcome the virtue of Constantia, at first by loading her with favours and imposing every species of obligation. These are squandered with a prodigal munificence, and her gratitude is raised to the highest pitch. Her virtue is notwithstanding invulnerable to all these assaults; and Ormond, thus foiled, changes his mode of assault, and endeavours to accomplish his object by open violence.

Ormond was published in 1799: and Mr. Brown prosecuted his labour in the region of fiction, with an ardour increased by the success he had obtained, and with a rapidity of execution seldom paralleled. He had at this time begun five novels, all of which were in a state of progression. Two of the five were published this same year—Arthur Mervyn, and Edgar Huntly. Arthur Mervyn, or Memoirs of the Year 1793, was the third novel Mr. Brown published. The following, which is the preface to it, will show the views and intentions of the author:

"The evils of pestilence by which this city has lately been afflicted, will probably form an era in its history. The schemes of reformation

and improvement to which they will give birth, or, if no efforts of human wisdom can avail to avert the periodical visitations of this calamity, the change in manners and population which they will produce, will be, in the highest degree, memorable. They have already supplied new and copious materials for reflection to the physician and the politicaleconomist. They have not been less fertile of instruction to the moral observer, to whom they have furnished new displays of the influence of human passions and motives.

" Amidst the medical and political discussions which are now afloat in the community relative to this topic, the author of these remarks has ventured to methodize his own reflections, and to weave into an humble narrative, such incidents as appeared to him most instructive and remarkable among those which came within the sphere of his own observation. It is every one's duty to profit by all opportunities of inculcating on mankind the lessons of justice and humanity. The influences of hope and fear, the trials of fortitude and constancy, which took place in this city, in the autumn of 1793, have, perhaps, never been exceeded in any age. It is but just to snatch some of these from oblivion, and to deliver to posterity a brief but faithful sketch of the condition of this metropolis during that calamitous

period. Men only require to be made acquainted with distress, for their compassion and their charity to be awakened. He that depicts, in lively colours, the evils of disease and poverty, performs an eminent service to the sufferers, by calling forth benevolence in those who are able to afford relief; and he who pourtrays examples of disinterestedness and intrepidity, confers on virtue the notoriety and homage that are due to it, and rouses in the spectators, the spirit of salutary emulation.

"In the following tale a particular series of adventures is brought to a close; but these are necessarily connected with the events which happened subsequent to the period here described. These events are not less memorable than those which form the subject of the present volume, and may hereafter be published either separately or in addition to this."

This last paragraph prepares the reader for a sequel, which it will be my duty to notice hereafter; as Mr. Brown in this instance wrote and published another volume in continuation. At present I will confine myself to some remarks upon the first part, published in 1799.

That species of pestilence which for years desolated our principal cities, is now recollected by

those who witnessed its effects with the sensation of dangers long passed, sufferings and losses reflected upon with tenderness, but without acuteness. The younger part of the community only know of the yellow-fever by books, or by the traditionary tales of their fathers. All feel as if the danger was past and never more to return. Yet no one will say that on the return of those blessings which foreign commerce is supposed to bestow on nations, we, in the midst of security, shall not be again visited by a disease which constantly exists in some of the countries to which our merchants and sailors resort for profit. With a view to the possible recurrence of the same scenes, as well as for its merits as a delineation of human nature as exhibited in our country, Arthur Mervyn is a work intitled to more than the common attention bestowed upon novels.

The author introduces his hero to the reader, sick of the prevailing pestilence of 1793, leaning against the outer wall of a house in Philadelphia, late in the evening, and but for the interference of some humane passenger, destined to perish in the street. Such a passenger returning to his home, perceives the situation of the unfortunate youth, and disdaining all those selfish considerations which led at that unfortunate period, to ac-

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tions of the most shocking hard-heartedness, resolves, after consulting his wife, whose character was equally benevolent and enlightened, to do his duty to his fellow-creature.

Mervyn is received and nursed by this benevolent pair; he recovers, and they are forming plans for his future welfare, when a friend visiting at the house recognises him, and excites by his conduct, suspicions against the character of the youth they had preserved. The embarrassments thus produced, lead to the youth's telling his story, which constitutes the volume before us.

The son of a yeoman of Chester county, Pennsylvania, and the only survivor of many children, Arthur's treatment was such, as a delicate constitution required, and such circumstances would prompt. His mother, whose superiority of intellect was decided in comparison with his father, died: and left that domestic economy, which falls to the female head of the family, to devolve upon a coarse rustic girl, who soon enticed the father of our hero into marriage. The usual consequences ensue, and Arthur quits his father's roof to *seek his fortune* in Philadelphia, destitute of knowledge of the world, of friends, or of money.

He arrives in the night, after a long walk of fifteen hours, and loses his bundle, containing all

his property, by leaving it in the market-place. He recollects that a neighbour of his father's is in town, and even the name of the inn at which he puts up, and going thither, falls into the company of a young man to whom he imparts his situation, and who pays for his supper, and invites him to partake of his bed for the night.

The rustic Arthur is conveyed by a back-door into a magnificent house, and up to a chamber in the third story, where his companion, under pretence of re-lighting his candle, leaves him locked up. Surrounded by doubt and perplexity, owing to the long absence of his conductor, his fears are increased by hearing one near him breathing as in sleep: this proves to be a child, and on the supposed approach of the parents, Mervyn retires into a closet. A man enters, who proves to be a husband who had deposited this infant in his wife's bed, in the hope that she, having recently lost her own, would adopt it. This takes place, and Arthur not only hears the dialogue appertaining to this incident, but an intimation of a plan by which the husband, through the agency of his brother, should defraud a *rich nabob* of thirty thousand dollars.

The perilous and perplexing situation of Arthur in the closet, and schemes for extricating himself, are happily described and detailed; and

not less so his difficulties in releasing himself from the bed-chamber without that detection which he so naturally dreaded. He at length finds his way once more to freedom and the canopy of Heaven.

His poverty is increased by the loss of his shoes, which he leaves in the closet to facilitate his undetected escape; and, thoroughly discouraged and disgusted with the city, he determines to seek the country, and obtain employment as a labourer: and, by chance, the street he takes leads him towards the Schuylkill, over which he had crossed in entering the town. Without money to pay the toll for passage, he in his distress turns into another street, and, wearied, seats himself on the steps which lead to the door of a magnificent mansion. While debating upon the propriety of asking relief from the inhabitants, he is disturbed by a servant who comes out to wash the marble steps; and, turning a corner, meets a passenger whom he addresses, with a request for a loan sufficient to pay his passage and procure him a meal.

After some questions which lead to his knowledge of the youth's unprotected and forlorn situation, he leads him to his house—the same magnificent fabric from whose portal he had just retired; and having received proofs of his ability

as a penman, and heard his artless story, he employs him as an amanuensis.

His patron places him immediately in the possession of a commodious apartment and abundant wardrobe. When disguised in his new habiliments, he surveys himself with wonder, and remarks his similarity to a stranger of the name of Clavering, a melancholy-mad youth, who had been received into the family of the elder Mervyn, and died under his roof.

Welbeck (for such was the name of Mervyn's patron), introduces him to a beautiful female, for whom he requires that respect which would be due to his daughter. This lovely creature gives tokens of the most lively surprise at the sight of Mervyn, who was clothed from a wardrobe which had formerly belonged to another, and utters exclamations in a language unknown to him, conversing in the same foreign tongue with Welbeck, evidently on a subject connected with Mervyn's appearance, and with a perturbation which amounts to astonishment and distress.

After breakfast, the lady, at the request of Welbeck, plays and sings, adding to the astonishment of the enraptured rustic, to whom every thing appertaining to his present situation appears as the effect of magic. After she has retired, Mervyn is conducted to an apartment ad-

joining that assigned as his; and Welbeck shewing his right hand, mutilated by the loss of the fore-finger, gives that as his reason for employing an amanuensis, and explains to Mervyn his duties, which are not to commence until the next week. In the mean time he is left to the disposal of his time, with no other restrictions than a due conformity to the hours of eating and sleeping observed by the family.

Mervyn, left to his own reflections, endeavours to account for all that has befallen him, and to predict his future fortunes. Welbeck is no other, in Mervyn's mind, than an illustrious foreigner who has taken refuge with the remains of his immense fortunes, in this land of refuge from European oppression: the lady is his daughter: the original owner of the clothes Mervyn wears was his son. The lady's attachment to her deceased brother, is to be transferred to the man who is so like him as to excite such lively sensations, and is to end in marriage.

After indulging some time in this waking dream, he sallies forth, and his curiosity is excited to gain some knowledge of the house in which he had so lately been immured. From a tailor in the neighbourhood, he learns that a young married couple reside in the house, and had lately lost their first-born babe, which had

nearly crazed the mother. Their names he does not learn.

Soon after this, Welbeck exacts a promise of silence from Mervyn, respecting every part of his story antecedent to his reception in his family. This conduct of Welbeck's excites suspicions in the breast of Mervyn; and even before he experiences the inconvenience arising from a promise, he repents having bound himself by it. The curiosity of Mervyn, which at all times borders on excess, is raised to a pitch far beyond that produced by any impulse he had before received; and the well-imagined incidents which immediately follow, are calculated to raise it still higher.

The reader cannot but be again reminded of Caleb Williams and Falkland; yet here is no servile copy: the characters of Mervyn and Welbeck are distinct in many circumstances from Williams and his master, and the situations in which they are placed are altogether new.

Mervyn is requested by Welbeck to carry a letter to Mrs. Wentworth, and is directed to leave it with her servant; but Welbeck, having represented the commission as of too much importance to be entrusted to a common messenger, Mervyn, seduced by his desire to see the lady, persuades himself that he shall better serve Wel-

beck by delivering the letter into her own hand, and for that purpose is shewn into her parlour. Here, while examining a portrait which reminds him of one painted by the unfortunate Clavering of himself, and given to Mervyn, and which had been lost with his bundle on the night of his arrival in town, Mrs. Wentworth enters, and is almost as much surprised by his similarity to some person known to her, as the lady at Welbeck's had been.

The lady having retired to write an answer to Welbeck, Mervyn falls anew to examining the contents of the apartment, and to his astonshment, finds the portrait of Clavering, which had been lost with the bundle. On Mrs. Wentworth's return, he claims his property, which leads to questions on her part putting him in a predicament, extremely painful on account of his promise given to Welbeck. He gives the lady some account of Clavering's death, and breaks through his embarrassment by declaring, that he will resign the portrait to her, but cannot disclose more relative to himself or past transactions.

From Mrs. Wentworth he learns that Clavering was the son of the gentleman who owned the house in which Welbeck resides. That he had been thwarted in his wishes to go to Europe, had suddenly disappeared, and as they had no traces

of him on this side the Atlantic, they had pursued him to Europe.

On the return of Mervyn to Welbeck, he relates what had passed with Mrs. Wentworth, and all he knew of Clavering. Welbeck undertakes to satisfy Mrs. Wentworth's curiosity, and desires him to avoid her and persist in his plan of secrecy.

A revolution had now taken place in the sensations of Mervyn. He no longer regarded Welbeck and the lady with the same complacency as at first. Mystery appeared incompatible with virtue. Suspicions were awakened which he could not quiet, and he feared for his own safety, and even his own integrity. An accidental meeting between Mervyn and his patron at the hour of day-break, at the door of his supposed daughter, from which he was issuing, adds to the misgivings and perplexity of the youth, which are still further increased by perceiving that the lady is in a state which is only compatible with the character of a wife. The same day he is informed that she had left the city to avoid the extreme heat of the summer months.

An errand to the counting-house of a merchant, revives in the mind of Mervyn the incidents of his first night in Philadelphia. Thetford the merchant, on receiving Welbeck's letter, remarks that it is from the nabob. The plot

which he had overheard for robbing *the nabob* is applied to Welbeck, and a determination formed of warning the latter by relating all he knew. In this purpose Mervyn is disappointed by Welbeck's absence from home, and not returning even at the hour when the servants usually retired. Mervyn alone sits up for him, but having retired from the parlour where he had left a light, on his return he finds that it had been taken away, although he knew the street-door to be locked, and the key to be hanging within. He supplies himself with another light, and while wavering in respect to his future conduct, his curiosity is excited by the sight of the lady's chamber-door, and he enters it; he however finds nothing extraordinary, excepting a miniature picture, very much resembling himself. While gratifying his ruling propensity, he hears the report of a pistol, and after recovering from the shock it occasions, he concludes that Welbeck had by some unknown means entered the house, gone to his chamber, and committed suicide.

Under this impression he goes to the door of Welbeck's chamber, but not gaining admittance, is led to examine the room above, in which he finds Welbeck gazing in mute despair on the corpse of a man recently murdered.

After a preliminary scene, Welbeck discloses

his story to Mervyn, which is the history of weakness, wickedness, hypocrisy, and sensuality, leading to every enormity and consequent misery. Clemenza Lodi, the lady heretofore described, was one of the victims of his villany, thrown into his power by the death of her brother, whose property, left with Welbeck for the sister's use, is applied to his own purposes and her destruction. This property was not inexhaustible, and with the usual improvidence of guilt, it was soon dissipated so far as to admonish Welbeck that the end was near. He now joins with Thetford in a mercantile project which takes the remainder, besides making him reponsible for a large amount of credit obtained by his notes. At the same time that he hears from Thetford that this vessel and cargo are lost, and he consequently reduced to beggary, he hears of the arrival of a man whose sister he had seduced, and who seeks for an interview with him. They meet accidentally at the door of Welbeck, and the injured man is the corpse which lies weltering in blood on the floor of Welbeck's study.

Welbeck requests of Mervyn to assist him in burying the remains of Watson, whose death he deplores; and then to accompany him across the Delaware. The incidents appertaining to the interment of the body, and the embarkation

on the river, are related in a style of eloquence and force, rarely met with. When in the middle of the river, Welbeck plunges in and sinks from the wondering youth, who loosing his hold of his oar, is left to the mercy of the stream. He swims to the shore with a pocket-book which Welbeck had given him, as the property of Watson, and having reached the city, he examines its contents by the light of a lamp. He finds three fifty-dollar bills and an open letter directed to Watson's wife. He incloses the money in the letter, drops it in the post-office, and then pursues his way to Welbeck's, for the purpose of resuming his rustic dress, and flying from the now detested city.

When in Welbeck's house and ready to depart, his curiosity prompts him to seek a manuscript volume, which Welbeck had mentioned to him as belonging to the elder Lodi, and, satisfying his scruples as to the propriety of taking this book; he seizes and bears it off, reaching the country west of Schuylkill without accident.

Here Mervyn pauses in his tale; and here may be said to end the first part of the novel. The benevolent man who had rescued him from pestilence, tells, from his knowledge, that this accorded with certain facts relative to Mrs. Wentworth and Welbeck. That Mrs. Went-

worth on sending to make some inquiries of Welbeck, found the house shut up and abandoned. That when the creditors of Welbeck were alarmed, Mrs. Wentworth seized on the contents of the house for rent, but no sale took place, in consequence of the breaking out of the late pestilence or yellow-fever.

Mervyn is requested by his benefactor, to relate that which subsequently befel him, until their meeting; and goes on to state, that on the morning of quitting the city, he was received as a labourer, on trial, by Mr. Hadwin, a plain, benevolent, American yeoman. Hadwin's family consisted of his wife and two daughters, with servants; and Mervyn's manners and intelligence soon rendered his situation that of a child of the family. The contrast between this place, these people, their manners, occupations and enjoyments, and the scenes and characters lately witnessed in the city, are happily noted by the author, without being dwelt upon. The elder daughter, it was soon discovered, had disposed of her affections. Mervyn becomes enamoured of the younger. While his time passed happily here, he recurred to a former thought of studying Italian by means of Lodi's book, and his own knowledge of Latin (a knowledge not accounted for), and accordingly sets about the task.

In the course of his study, he finds two leaves cemented together, and on opening them, discovers a bank-note. Other leaves are found similarly attached, and notes found to the amount of twenty thousand dollars. After some speculations suggested by the possession of this treasure, and its escape from the grasp of Welbeck, he recollects that it belongs to Lodi's daughter, and that it is his duty to seek her. But now all other thoughts are banished by the rumour of the pestilence which desolated the city, and filled the country with consternation.

None suffered more from the fears, which this public calamity inspired, than Susan Hadwin. Her betrothed had fixed himself as a clerk with a merchant in the city; though entreated by letter to fly to the country, he persisted in attending to his master's interests at the risk of his own life. Susan continued her entreaties, and her fears and anxieties threatened to produce the most fatal effects upon her health. Hadwin at length wrote, commanding Wallace, who was his nephew, to come home with a neighbour, who still continued to visit the infected town with his market cart. The neighbour again returned, and, to the inexpressible dismay of Susan, without a companion. Wallace, who had daily sought him, had on this occasion failed

to come, and the distress of the Hadwins, who could only account for his non-attendance by supposing the worst, was extreme.

Mervyn forms the generous determination of going in quest of Wallace, to bring him home, if well—to nurse and assist him, if sick. Without communicating his intention, he makes the requisite inquiries, finds that Wallace lives with Thetford, and has reason to believe that he is the youth, who for a trick to laugh at, enticed him into Thetford's dwelling, and shut him up in the bed-chamber.

Mervyn departs for the city, impelled by the benevolent intentions he had adopted, and hoping at the same time to discover the unfortunate daughter of Lodi, and restore to her the notes which had so strangely fallen into his possession. As Mervyn approaches and enters the city of pestilence, the narrative becomes historical, and is a just and vivid picture of the scenes of 1793, and of their influence upon the moral conduct of men.

Mervyn arrives at night, and, after some adventures, seeks the house of Thetford: he finds it abandoned, yet open; and makes his way to a chamber, in which was a light: he there finds a man in the last agonies; and, while examining some tokens of pillage, is knocked down and

deprived of sense. He narrowly escapes being buried while thus stunned: and, on the entrance of one of those benevolent beings, who at that time exposed themselves to every danger for the purposes of humanity, he learns, among other circumstances, that Thetford's family had removed from this house some weeks ago. He is induced to remain until morning, where he is, by the representations of the benevolent Quaker, who relates to him the story of Maravegli, the person whose death he had arrived to witness, which is nearly the history of the unfortunate Scandella.

On the return of day, Mervyn goes to Thetford's house, and finds that Thetford and his family had been cut off the last night; previously to which, Thetford had, among other acts of inhumainty generated by fear, sent Wallace to certain death at the hospital.

The friendly person who communicates this intelligence, offers Mervyn food, and the opportunity of repose. After breakfast he is left alone, and while he is meditating a search in Thetford's house, for papers and books belonging to Wallace, Hadwin arrives, having come at the risk of his life, owing to the criminal secrecy of Mervyn, to learn something of Wallace, and soothe the agonies of Susan.

Sensible of the danger to which Hadwin was exposed, Mervyn hastily tells him, that Wallace is dead, and prevails upon him to return to his family.

Mervyn again enters the house of Thetford, with a determination to secure the property of Wallace for his friends, and, while prosecuting this design, Wallace himself, having escaped all the horrors of disease and the hospital, pale, exhausted and emaciated, enters. After an explanation, Mervyn, though oppressed by the disease, which had now fastened on him, goes in pursuit of a vehicle to convey Wallace to the Hadwins; this being fruitless, he prevails upon the young man to attempt to gain the country, by the exertion of his remaining strength, and after various distresses, a stranger, whose route lay past Hadwin's door, is prevailed upon to give Wallace a place in his carriage.

Mervyn once more alone, and sinking under the effects of disease, endeavours to return to the house of the benevolent Quaker, but sinks exhausted upon the steps of a house which he recognizes to be Welbeck's. The fear of being conveyed to the hospital, the horrors of which had been detailed by Wallace, gives him strength to climb the wall and gain the bathing-house, where copious draughts of water give him some relief from his tortures.

Unexpectedly he espies the shutters of a lower window of the house open, and availing himself of the circumstance, he enters and gains possession of the chamber and bed of Welbeck.

While ruminating upon the incidents which had lately befallen, he thinks of the treasure he possesses, and determines that it ought to be applied to the relief of the poor of the suffering city. The mode of securing this application, he concludes, will be to inclose it, and direct it to some eminent citizen, with directions for its application. He resolves to execute this plan while he has yet strength, and rising, proceeds to Welbeck's study. As he attempts to enter, he hears some one bolt the door within, and thus knows that the place is pre-occupied.

His entreaties to be admitted, are at first answered by sobs and groans, and at length by threats uttered in a strange voice, which however pronounces his name and bids him begone.

Here is introduced an episodical incident, altogether useless, and such a blot upon the story as could only have arisen from the author's writing, without revision, and forgetting in some measure that part of his work already consigned to the printer.

The occupant of the study, however, proves to be Welbeck, who not possessing resolution enough to effect his purposed suicide, had each-

ed the Jersey shore, and had been humanely sheltered and nursed through a fever which succeeded the attempt upon his life. Here it had occurred to him, that Lodi, in speaking of the sale of his father's West-Indian property, mentioned that the sum obtained for it was forty thousand dollars. Half only of this sum had been discovered by Welbeck. How had the remainder been appropriated? He remembered that he had in his youth been in the habit of depositing bank-bills between the leaves of a book, in which he occasionally wrote extracts from classical authors; he thought of Lodi's manuscript, leaves of which he recollected as adhering together; the thought that this volume might contain the remaining twenty thousand dollars, animated him to new existence and exertion, and for the purpose of determining this momentous question, he had braved every danger, and the result had been that he had now discovered that the book containing the supposed treasure was missing.

The scene which follows, may be termed the denouement of the drama of Arthur Mervyn. In it the author may be supposed to have exerted his powers to the utmost. As I hope that this analysis of the story will induce the reader of this volume to become the reader of the romance,

I will not abridge a scene which is intended to excite to the climax of interest. It will be sufficient to mention, that Mervyn avows the possession of the treasure, and resists the menaces and artifices used by Welbeck to regain it. In the contest, the *notes* are burned to ashes.

The rage of Welbeck on this catastrophe is diverted from Mervyn, by the entrance of people into the house; he flies, and Mervyn, fearing the agents of the police, who would convey him to the dreaded hospital, seeks refuge in a recess which screens him from pursuit, and at night, in making an effort to reach the house of Medlicote, the benevolent Quaker, he was found and rescued from death by the person to whom he recounts his story.

The faults which deform this interesting and eloquent narrative, are altogether owing to haste, both in composing and publishing. The work was sent to the printer before the writer had fully determined its plot. But for this, we should not meet with such obvious errors, as making Mervyn perfectly resemble both Lodi and Clavering, without any necessity for his resembling either; exciting an interest in Mrs. Wentworth, and leaving her and her story, like Butler's bear and fiddle; keeping Welbeck's servants quietly asleep in the house, while pistols are discharged,

murder committed, the dead body buried, &c. when they could have been so easily removed; not to mention the impropriety of crowding so many incidents into the short space of five days. Dramatists are supposed to be bound by time, and circumscribed in the scene of their action; not so novelists, and therefore probability should not be violated, when no advantage can be gained by it. These are, however, venial faults, and the beauties of Arthur Mervyn are splendid. But in proportion to the talents displayed by the author, is our regret that he did not do as much and as well as he proved himself capable of doing.*

Edgar Huntley, Mr. Brown's fourth romance, rapidly followed Arthur Mervyn. In this work, the author has chosen for a *cause* by which to produce effects at once stupendous and mysterious, that disease which is called *somnambulism*. The wonderful effects of this hitherto not sufficiently explained malady, have been so frequently observed and commented upon, that its use as a foundation for fiction will not subject the author to a criticism similar to that which objected to the self-combustion and ventriloquism of Wieland. Edgar Huntley unites, to events founded on somnambulism, "incidents of Indian hos-

* A London edition of Arthur Mervyn, containing both the first and second parts, was published in 3 vols. in 1803.

tility, and the perils of the western wilderness."

The hero tells his own story. He addresses it to the sister of his friend Waldegrave, who had been mysteriously murdered under the boughs of an elm, in the midst of a private road, on the verge of Norwalk, a wild and romantic tract of country, in one of the western counties of Pennsylvania.

Edgar relates, that journeying on foot with intent to reach the house of his uncle, overtaken by night, and ruminating on the fate of Waldegrave, he approached the fatal elm, and descried through the gloom, a man, naked from the waist upward, digging beneath the tree. His imagination represented in this man, the murderer of his friend; but upon hearing the sobs of anguish, which burst from him, his rage is changed to pity and sympathy. The stranger sat down in the pit he had dug, and uttered the most heart-rending moans; then suddenly starting up, began to fill the pit with the earth he had thrown up. On being addressed, he gazed at the quarter from whence the voice came, without appearing to see any object, and then continued to fill the pit. Having finished his work, he departed, and Edgar, recognizing in this man, the conduct of a sleep-walker, proceeds on his way to his uncle's.

In thinking upon the late occurrence, Edgar is led to believe, that the sleep-walker is the murderer of Waldegrave. Although he did not recoguize the features of the man, he is led by circumstances to believe him to be a labourer, called Clithero, an emigrant from Ireland, now belonging to the family of Inglefield, a neighbouring yeoman.

Edgar, as well as Arthur, is possessed of unbounded curiosity. His maxim is "curiosity, like virtue, is its own reward." Like virtue too, it appears to be a foe to inactivity. Edgar, the next night, as soon as the family had retired to rest, betakes him to the elm tree, and there again sees the sorrowful somnambulator. When the perturbed spirit leaves the elm, contrary to Huntley's expectations, instead of taking the road to Inglefield's, he takes an opposite direction, and Edgar following, is led through bogs and briers, down steeps and over precipices, amidst the desert wilds of Norwalk, until his conductor, plunging into a cavern, disappears. At the mouth of this cave, Edgar watches until morn, and then returns unsatisfied home.

On a third night, Edgar succeeds so far as to trace the sleep-walker to an out-house of Inglefield's, and thus to confirm his conjecture that this was no other than Clithero.

Edgar determines to question the sleep-walker, of whom several circumstances are eloquently related, tending to raise the interest of the reader in Clithero to a great height, before the design of Edgar is put in action. This interview is finely narrated, and we perceive in the unhappy Clithero, something allied to insanity, which adds to the sympathy already created for him. He breaks from Edgar, after promising that he shall hereafter know his story.

Some time after, the sufferer unburthens his heart, after complaining that the misguided curiosity of Edgar had destroyed him. A native of Ireland, the son of a farmer, he had been educated with, and made a companion to, the son of the lady of the manor, and in due time attended him on his travels. The attendant proved more virtuous than his lord, and his admonitions becoming troublesome, he was sent home, though with all justice done to his character. He becomes a member of the lady's family, as her steward, and has nearer and better opportunities of appreciating her admirable qualities and conduct.

Mrs. Lorimer had a twin brother, as like her in person as he was opposite in every mental or moral feature. Wiatte was the object of his sister's love, who, in this alone, deviated from her

uniform rectitude. He was a monster of depravity, who sought her misery, and had been the occasion of preventing her from marrying a man worthy of her choice, who had thereby been banished from his native land.

The misdeeds of Wiatte, at length procured the sentence of transportation to be passed upon him, but it was said that in the passage he was engaged in a mutiny and killed.

Mrs. Lorimer sought out an orphan daughter of this misloved brother, and adopted her as the intended wife of her son. Clithero saw and loved Clarice. Young Lorimer and Clarice saw each other with indifference, but Clarice felt her affections interested for Clithero; who thinking that honour forbade his aspiring to his lady's neice, resolves to depart from the scene of danger. In order to put this scheme into practice, he has an interview with Mrs. Lorimer, the consequence of which is her assuring him of the affections of Clarice, and giving her cheerful consent to the union.

The reader is led to this climax, in the happiness of Clithero, by a narrative of peculiar interest and felicity, and the expected nuptials are only delayed by ordinary occurrences, when the former favoured lover of Mrs. Lorimer, Sarsefield, makes his appearance again on the stage.

This worthy man had been buffeted about by fortune, in various quarters of the world, and among other situations, had taught at the village school of Edgar's native place, and been his beloved preceptor. An intimacy takes place between Sarsefield and Clithero, and the former appears to be re-assuming his early influence over Mrs. Lorimer, when the monster Wiatte, though supposed long since dead, returns. Here appears the fiend destined to blast the happiness of Mrs. Lorimer and Sarsefield, of Clarice and Clithero, and as such the latter views him. Anxiety deprives Clithero of his usual sleep, and produces a predisposition to mental derangement. In this state he is attacked by Wiatte, and not knowing his assailant, he accidentally kills him. When he discovers that it is the brother of his patroness, and the father of Clarice whom he has killed, his mind, predisposed to insanity, is overpowered, and he is hurried on to a series of acts in rapid succession, which terminate in the death of Mrs. Lorimer, and the overthrow of all his happiness.

Clithero, having finished his tale, which is told with the vehement eloquence of madness, avows a determination of self-murder, and plunges into the thicket of the deserts of Norwalk.

Several days pass, and Clithero does not return. Edgar determines to seek for him or his remains, in the wilds of Norwalk, which are described as possessing the extreme of ruggedness, and caverns of such subterranean magnitude as to have baffled all conjecture of the extent.

That cavern to which he had formerly followed Clithero, was of this description, and Edgar undertakes to explore its recesses. The author has here a new field for descriptive eloquence, and after leading his hero and reader through the dangers of the dark, emerges on the summit of a mountain. Descriptions of perils amidst alpine precipices succeed, which can only be appreciated by the reader of the whole work, and which terminate in the discovery of Clithero, seated apparently out of the reach of human means, and in all the majestic misery of madness produced by conscious guilt. This second Cardenio soon vanishes, and Edgar returns after herculean labours to his home and his bed, not to sleep but to ruminate upon the fate of the sleep-walker.

The next day the restless and indefatigable Huntley, resumes his pursuit of the wretch who had been driven from the society of men, by his suspicions and curiosity. He reaches again the spot from whence he had discovered Clithero, and

having, in prosecution of a plan formed the preceding day, felled a tree across the chasm which then separated them, he proceeds in his adventurous search, and again discovers the maniac. Remorse had ceased with consciousness, and he slept. After much debate, Edgar humanely decides not to awaken him, but to leave food by his side and return with the satisfaction of having gained access to his retreat, and, as he hopes, the means of alleviating his woes, if not of restoring him to health and peace.

Edgar receives a message, requesting him to pass the next night at the house of Inglefield, and in compliance, passes in the evening by the fatal elm. The sight of this tree and certain indications that the earth had been recently removed, suggested ideas that the maniac in his sleep, might have buried in this spot something connected with the history of Mrs. Lorimer or Clarice. This was sufficient for the restless curiosity of our hero, and having formed his resolution to return from the house of Inglefield to the elm, instead of going to bed, he accordingly sits awaiting the proper time for the enterprize, when his curiosity receives a new impulse and leads his limbs in another direction.

In the chamber appropriated to the guest, stood a box, which, as Inglefield's housekeeper

had told Huntley, was the property and workmanship of Clithero. This box was, in its construction, eminently calculated to excite curiosity, as it was immovably closed without discoverable lock or key-hole. The desire to examine this box was irresistible, and having noted its uncommon structure on the outside, the desire to scrutinize within was still more irresistible.

Notwithstanding the consciousness of doing wrong, the box is opened by means of accidentally discovering a secret spring, but nothing results from this success except that all Huntley's ingenuity cannot shut it again as before.

The project of digging under the elm, is resumed, and executed. Here another box is found, and borne off to Inglefield's, but as Edgar approaches the house, he sees a man issue thence, whom he distinguishes as Clithero. On entering the apartment he had so lately occupied, he discovers the box, which had been violated by his lawless curiosity, dashed into fragments on the hearth. On examining his prize, he finds a manuscript volume in the hand-writing of Mrs. Lorimer, connected with the history of herself and her brother.

On the next day, the persevering Huntley again proceeds to the desert haunts of the sleep-walker. A storm of wind and rain cannot damp

the ardour of his curiosity, and new adventures and new descriptions of this solitary region, under the influence of tempests and torrents, amply repay the reader for accompanying him. His escape from a panther is narrated in a manner pre-eminently entitled to praise.

After the perils and hair-breadth escapes of this day, Edgar returns to his uncle's, and the next night is partly passed in sleep. He awakes, however, before morning; and his ever-restless spirit prompts him to seek a certain pacquet of letters left by Waldegrave, which, though deposited by himself in a private cabinet in his chamber, and under lock and key, is not to be found.

Every effort to regain this pacquet is in vain: and, with his senses bewildered by the circumstance, he throws himself on his bed, only to revolve again and again the circumstances of this inexplicable robbery.

He is aroused by his uncle, who comes to inquire into the cause of his being up during the time of sleep, and why he had gone up stairs into the *long room* or garret. The question puzzles Huntley, who asserts that he has not been out of his chamber: and the uncle as positively asserts, that he, or some one else, had been walking to and fro in the upper story. This unknown visitant is connected by Edgar, with the loss of

Waldegrave's letters; and his mind becomes hourly more perplexed by these incidents, and his eager concern for the fate of Clithero.

An episode, here introduced, relieves the reader from pursuing a continued narrative of uncommonly high-wrought incidents, and inculcates a pure lesson of morality: but, as it is an episode, I shall omit an analysis of it.

The reader, perhaps, has suspected, from the adventures of the last-mentioned night, the loss of the pacquet and the unknown visitant of the long-room, that restlessness and anxiety had produced in Edgar the disease of somnambulism. The continuation of the narrative confirms this conjecture. He goes to sleep, as usual, in his chamber, under the roof of his uncle; and awakes to consciousness, surrounded by utter darkness, stretched on the craggy surface of a rock, with limbs benumbed by cold, and aching with bruises—one of the most forlorn outcasts of human misery. This stupendous incident is finely imagined, and adequately narrated. By degrees, the unfortunate nocturnal wanderer gains a full sense of his forlorn condition, though without suspicion of the cause which had produced such disastrous effects. He had fallen through an aperture of the rock into one of the caverns of Norwalk; and appears to have only

escaped death in one form, to meet it in another more horrible. To escape from the torments of hunger, he contemplates self-murder. Under this accumulated misery, however, the love of life prevails: and, armed with an Indian tomahawk, which accident had placed in his hand, he gropes his darksome way; until a rencontre with a second panther gives him a bloody banquet, and saves him from death in the form then most dreaded. The effects of this unusual food, are pain and thirst in the most tormenting degree: but his strength is exerted to extricate himself from prison; and at length his steps are directed, by the sound of water, to a distant light, and new and, if possible, more perilous adventures.

He arrives at an aperture of his rocky prison, from which he descries, sleeping by a fire, four brawny savages of the wilderness, armed for war. The sound of the water-fall came from beyond them; and his progress to this source of relief to his torment is, of course, totally impeded. The parents of Edgar had been murdered by Indians; and with their images, the strongest terrors and antipathies had ever been associated. A project of escape from the sleeping foe is frustrated, by discovering that a fifth warrior watched with his back to Edgar and the fire, and his face towards the mouth of

the cave. The centinel, however, rises, and goes out. The sound of low moanings directs the eyes of Huntley to a girl, whom the savages had borne off from her murdered relatives, and who lay bound on the earth, while they refreshed their limbs after the fatigues of desolation and murder. The desire of rescuing this innocent, added to the intolerable torments of thirst, urge the youth to attempt a passage past the sleepers. He attracts her attention, and ensures her silence. He seizes a musket and hatchet belonging to the centinel, and issues from the cave. The vaccillation of his thoughts—the extremity of his perils—are described with the pen of a master. He encounters and despatches the wakeful savage, without alarming his comrades; and, having satiated his thirst and renewed his strength, he generously returns, and accomplishes the rescue of the helpless captive. After the difficulties of making their way through a wilderness, they arrive at a log-hut, which, though deserted, affords them shelter and refreshment. Having now leisure to observe the gun he had brought off, he finds it a double-barrelled fusee belonging to himself, and left at his uncle's. Impressed with the conviction that his uncle and sisters had been murdered by the savages he had left in the cave, he wishes only for revenge and death; and soon has an opportunity to try his arms by

the approach of three of the enemy, whom he discovers, by the moon-light, at some distance from the hut.

By an incident most happily imagined and described, Edgar is placed in such a situation as to command a view of the savages as they enter, without being seen by them, and after witnessing their surprise and exultation on regaining the captive girl, he is enabled to choose a spot which will enable him to shoot at least two of the foe, as they shall come forth from the hut.

The shrieks of the girl arrest his attention, and he sees an Indian drag her by the hair from the hut, and prepare to end her existence. Edgar's ball arrests the blow, and lays the barbarian dead at the feet of his intended victim. Another comes forth, but to share his comrade's fate. By seizing the loaded musket of the first slain savage; Edgar is enabled, by a happy incident, to despatch the third of his enemies; but being slightly wounded, bleeding and exhausted, his forlorn condition and that of the girl, are scarcely capable of aggravation, when they are found by a party of the armed yeomanry of the neighbourhood, who are in pursuit of the marauders.

On their approach, Huntley, through fatigue and loss of blood, faints. His situation causes him to be left as dead, by the friends who carry off the girl, and Edgar is reserved for further

perils and adventures, and to make his way back to the dwelling of his uncle, from whence he had been led by circumstances so marvellous, and to himself, as yet, unaccountable.

He has again to rely upon his fire-arms for protection, and again to shed human blood, and witness the agonies of violent death. Bewildered, in his attempts to regain the road leading homewards, he is lost and benighted, and finding that he is pursued by armed men, whom in the darkness he supposes to be savages, he plunges into a river, and being by that action mistaken by the pursuers, his friends, for an Indian, he is exposed to their efforts for his destruction.

Escaping from this perilous situation, and pursuing his way, he encounters the vestiges of Indian warfare—desolated houses, scalped and mangled corpses of females, some of those many horrors which are always the consequence of the cruel and merciless hostility of those savages, whom the inhuman policy of European nations has so often armed with the rifle, the tomahawk and the scalping knife, against the inhabitants of the United States—against the only civilized people, who have endeavoured to wrest from the savage his hatchet, and place in his hand the instruments of agriculture.

As Huntley approaches his home, he is distracted by reports which lead him to believe

that his sisters and the family of his uncle, have been victims to violence and murder. He enters a house in the neighbourhood, and has an unexpected interview with *Sarsefield.*

He learns from his former preceptor that his uncle is dead, but that his sisters are in safety. That the family mansion had not been visited, but his uncle had fallen in conflict with the enemy, and thus had the double-barrelled fusee of Edgar passed into savage hands. Sarsefield had been one of the pursuers of the marauding band, and without knowing him, seen Edgar at the time of his fainting at the door of the hut. Subsequent circumstances had suggested, that the forlorn and wounded youth was Edgar Huntley, and a search had been instituted for his relief by the friends who had endeavoured through mistake to destroy him in the river.

I have by no means mentioned all the incidents, which the fertile invention of the author has introduced into this most interesting narrative. I would willingly induce the reader to seek a book, full of moral instruction and fascinating amusement.

Sarsefield, having married the lamented Mrs. Lorimer, whom Clithero supposed dead, has brought her to America, and receives from Huntley the news of Clithero's situation, and a recapitulation of his story. Sarsefield will not

listen to any extenuation of what he supposes to be guilt in Clithero, and while still engaged in conversation with Edgar, the unhappy maniac is brought to the house by a party who had been in pursuit of the Indians. He was mangled by their weapons but not dead. He has strength to enter into a conversation with Edgar, in which the effects of his conduct towards him is detailed, and some interesting explanations given.

Sarsefield is convinced by Edgar, that Clithero's former conduct was the effect of insanity, and not of guilt, and leaves Pennsylvania to prosecute a journey into Virginia, which had brought him from New York, where he had left his wife.

Clithero's wounds are cured, and before he had been informed that he had not caused the death of his patroness, he disappears.

At this period the narrative of Huntley ceases, and the denouement of the romance is found in a series of letters, which conclude the volumes.

The first is from Huntley to Sarsefield, telling him that Clithero is apprised that his patroness is alive, and has set out for New York, "with a mysterious intention to visit her," and calling upon Sarsefield, if possible, to prevent the interview.

The second letter explains the means by which Clithero obtained information of Mrs. Sarse-

field's being alive, and by apprising the reader that Clithero is still a maniac, prepares him for the catastrophe.

The third and last letter is from Sarsefield to Huntley, and relates the consequences of his letters upon Mrs. Sarsefield, and upon Clithero. The first is materially injured in her health; the second, being secured as a madman, commits suicide.

Perhaps another denouement might have been more satisfactory. Perhaps the author may be accused of slighting his novel, near its conclusion. If he is guilty, he is not the first man of great talents, who has been convicted of the charge.

Of the beauties of Edgar Huntley, or of the opinion which I entertain of its merits, the reader may judge by the analysis I have given. Its defects, like those of Arthur Mervyn (first part) arise from haste in composition, and from crowding the incidents into an unnecessarily short period.

In the year 1800, appeared the second part of Arthur Mervyn. The author's first intention appears to be that of creating and detailing a series of complicated difficulties, flowing from Mervyn's connection with the depraved villain Welbeck; but the reader is soon convinced that

the work has no plan, and is of course subject to contradictory passages, and to every species of fault which a man of Mr. Brown's talents could be guilty of.

It is no apology to the purchaser or reader of a book, that the author is occupied at the same time with several distinct works, some proceeding in composition only, some both in composition and printing, some just begun and others nearly finished. We may admire the versatility and industry of the author, but we must lament the loss of time and reputation such a mode of writing and publishing must occasion to him, and the loss of amusement and instruction to his readers.

Many of the faults of the second part of Arthur Mervyn appear to be purely gratuitous. We are at a loss to assign any motive for the author's introducing such passages or incidents. The want of plan at the beginning, and the constant change of plan which is apparent in the prosecution of the work, are causes of the most obvious faults. Another cause of failure in this novel, is the frequent attempts at humour, a quality of which Mr. Brown had no portion in himself, or any adequate conception in others. Witness Mrs. Althorp's account of Arthur's behaviour in his father's family, and his occupation of knitting

stockings. Both as a continuation of a preceding work, and as a work of itself, the reader is subjected to continual disappointments. He cannot but remember the mysterious *something*, which the hero discovers in the cock-loft of Welbeck's house, in the first part, and on which the greatest stress is laid as an instrument to raise curiosity; but in the second part there is no allusion to the incident. He will find both in the first and second parts, that Eliza Hadwin is the most worthy, and artless, and interesting creature of the author's creation, but in the conclusion she is abandoned both by hero and author, in a manner as unexpected as disgusting.

With all these faults, the second part of Arthur Mervyn contains passages eminently beautiful, and, in common with others of Mr. Brown's writings, passages perfectly descriptive of himself. Of this latter class it will answer a biographical purpose to quote one or two.

P. 58. He makes Mervyn say, "If men be chiefly distinguished from each other by the modes in which attention is employed, either on external and sensible objects, or merely on abstract ideas and the creatures of reflection, I may justly claim to be enrolled in the second class. My existence is a series of thoughts, rather than of motions. Ratiocination and de-

duction leave my senses unemployed. The fulness of my fancy renders my eye vacant and inactive. Sensations do not precede and suggest, but follow and are secondary to the acts of my mind."

P. 162. Mervyn, after describing his companions in a stage coach, viz. a creole Frenchman, two negroes and a monkey, proceeds thus: " my thought was busy in a thousand ways. I sometimes gazed at the faces of my *four* companions and endeavoured to discern the differences and samenesses between them. I took an exact account of the features, proportions, looks, and gestures of the monkey, the Congolese, and the creole Gaul. I compared them together and examined them apart. I looked at them in a thousand different points of view, and pursued, untired and unsatiated, those trains of reflections which began at each change of tone, feature and attitude.

" I remarked the country as it successively arose before me, and found endless employment in examining the shape and substance of the fence, the barn and the cottage, the aspect of earth and of Heaven."

It is thus that, perhaps, every man who writes books, especially works of imagination, describes himself, his habits, his modes of thinking,

and sometimes his person. How pleasing it would be if we could point to the passages, which indicated such particulars of those eminent writers who have delighted and instructed us in youth, and continue to be the companions and counsellors of our way through life.

In 1801, Mr. Brown published his novel of Clara Howard.* This work is of a character very different from those which preceded it from the same pen. It has a regular plan. It is satisfactorily concluded. Its incidents are more within the scope of probability. Its difficulties arise from the conflicting passions of persons eminently moral and delicate. It has no passages so highly wrought and eloquent, neither has it such glaring defects as those which I have lamented as appertaining to the former works. Its form is likewise different, it being epistolary.

The story is briefly this. The parents of Mary Wilmot, a German merchant and an English lady, are driven by circumstances of aggravated misfortune, occasioned by complicated guilt and honour, to that asylum of European crimes, misfortunes, or enterprise, America. The parents die and leave Mary, who had been

* This novel has been republished in England under the name of Philip Stanley, which appellation is given to the personage here called Hartley.

educated to the indulgences of fortune, dependent upon her needle for the support of herself and her brother, then a child.

Edward Hartley, the hero of the tale, was a country lad, left with two orphan sisters, to the protection of an uncle. Happily for him there resided in the village an English gentleman, by name Howard, who having dissipated the greater part of his inheritance in youthful follies, and rejected the love of an uncommonly endowed woman, flies repentant to our shores on receiving a letter from her, announcing her marriage to his cousin, and admonishing him of the folly of his pursuits.

Mr. Howard is a recluse. Hartley becomes a favourite with him and owes his mental improvement to his conversation, books and instructions. Suddenly, however, Mr. Howard departs for Europe. Edward is put apprentice to a watchmaker and becomes acquainted with young Wilmot, and through him with Mary.

Wilmot is at this period seventeen, and usher to a school; having preferred "honourable poverty, a studious life, and the dignity of imparting knowledge to others," to "the desk, bar, and pulpit;" a preference, says the author, which "no doubt, partly arose from youthful timidity and self-diffidence, and age might have insensi-

bly changed his views." Hartley is about Wilmot's age, but Mary much older, and neither blessed nor cursed by the charms of beauty.

Hartley's esteem for Mary Wilmot increases through a long intimacy of unbounded confidence, but it is esteem without passion. On the contrary, Mary becomes enamoured of her young friend. In this state of affairs the brother is accidentally drowned; Mary becomes more particularly the charge of Edward; and to their mutual surprise, on examining into the brother's affairs, he is found to be credited in the bank of P—— for five thousand dollars, and the credit of two years standing.

This inexplicable circumstance causes, among other effects, the determination of Edward and Mary to become man and wife, if no claimant appears in six months from the time of the agreement.

Mary in the mean time retires from Philadelphia to a village, and lives frugally as a boarder upon a part of this money; but before the expiration of the six months, an old acquaintance of Wilmot's returns from the perils of foreign voyages, and in searching for Wilmot, encounters Hartley, and tells him that he had remitted a bill of exchange to Wilmot for five

thousand dollars to be kept in trust for him until his return.

Morton's story, the dates and the sum, leave no doubt in Hartley's mind; and he writes to Mary an explanatory and introductory letter, which he gives to Morton. While musing on this reverse, Mr. Howard arrives at Edward's native village in pursuit of him, having returned to America and brought with him as his wife, his cousin's widow, with her daughter. He has determined to make the fortunes of his young friend by his patronage, and a marriage with his wife's daughter, *Clara Howard.*

I will here notice, that Mr. Brown has made use of similar incidents and characters in both his novels of Edgar Huntley and Clara Howard. The brother of Huntley's mistress is precisely the brother of Mary Wilmot; he receives and deposits money, dies, his sister inherits, a claimant appears, and the claim is allowed. The friend and instructor of Huntley is an English emigrant, who returns home, marries a former mistress who had had an intermediate husband, and returns again to America. If an inference should be drawn from all this, that Mr. Brown thought English emigrants the only competent instructors of American youth; how wide of the fact

both as to his belief, and in respect to truth would be the conclusion.

Mr. Howard pursues his way to Virginia, promising on his return to take Edward with him to New York. Edward does not explain to Howard his situation in regard to Mary Wilmot, but writes to her all the circumstance of this rencontre and of Howard's intentions respecting him.

Edward's reflections upon the prospects which now open upon him of an elevation from a vile to a noble rank in society, by a marriage with Clara Howard, are filled with useful truths to an American. I will extract the following passage on the state of society in England and America, and the debasing prejudices with which the natives of this country have been poisoned by the remnants of the English colonial tyranny, and by English books.

"There is somewhat in the advantages of birth and rank—in the habit of viewing objects through the medium of books, that gives a sacred obscurity, a mysterious elevation, to human beings. I had been familiar with the names of nobility and royalty, but the things themselves had ever been shrouded in an awe-creating darkness. Their distance had likewise produced an

interval, which I imagined impossible for me to overpass. They were objects to be viewed, like the divinity, from afar. The only sentiments which they could excite, were reverence and wonder. That I should ever pass the mound which separated my residence, and my condition, from theirs, was utterly incredible.

" The ideas annexed to the term *peasant*, are wholly inapplicable to the tillers of ground in America; but our notions are the offspring more of the books we read, than of any other of our external circumstances. Our books are almost wholly the productions of Europe, and the prejudices which infect us, are derived chiefly from this source. These prejudices may be somewhat rectified by age, and by converse with the world, but they flourish in full vigour in youthful minds, reared in seclusion and privacy, and undisciplined by intercourse with various classes of mankind. In me, they possessed an unusual degree of strength. My words were selected and defined according to foreign usages, and my notions of dignity were modelled on a scale, which the Revolution has completely taken away. I could never forget that my condition was that of a *peasant*, and in spite of reflection, I was the slave of those sentiments of self-contempt and humiliation, which pertain to that

condition elsewhere, though chimerical and visionary on the western side of the Atlantic."

In America there is no peasantry. The tillers of the earth are the owners of the soil. We have, strictly speaking, neither peasant nor farmer: our workers on the soil are freeholders —are yeomen. This is one of the proud distinctions between this country and Europe.

In one portion of our country the remains of the English slave-trade exist—and there peasants exist. Those who till the earth are slaves as in Russia; and are, unfortunately for themselves and humanity, distinguished by their skins and their features from other men. They are a little more (and more avowedly) slaves than the peasantry of Ireland; and still a little more than the peasantry of England. But, with the exception of the slave-holding states, as we have no nobility but from worth, so we have no villainy but from misdeed. We have neither lord nor peasant, except in the south; where the planter partakes of European nobility, and the African slave of European peasantry.

Bound to Mary Wilmot by the ties of honour, though not of love, and finding the prospect of marriage indefinitely removed by the claims of Morton, Hartley obeys the injunctions received from Howard, and goes to New York, to join

Mrs. Howard and Clara, but first calls at the residence of Mary Wilmot. She had fled in company with a man, and left no traces whither.

A young man of the name of Sedley had offered marriage to Mary before she knew Hartley. He was worthy, but she did not love him, and rejected his addresses. Sedley had persevered, and had introduced his sister, Mrs. Valentine, to her acquaintance. Sedley and his sister are rich; and Hartley now finds that Mary had gone off with them. He proceeds to New York, and joins the Howards.

Clara Howard is every thing that can inspire love, and Edward becomes enamoured. Months pass away in the blissful occupation of gaining her affections. At length, by accident, he meets Morton, who informs him that he had not seen Mary Wilmot, had not received the five thousand dollars, and should not apply for it.

Uneasiness respecting the fate of Mary intrudes to destroy the felicity which Edward enjoys in Clara's love; and he explains to her his situation and engagements, and does ample justice to Mary Wilmot's worth and attachment to him.

Clara immediately rejects all thoughts of union with Hartley, considering the claims of Mary as an insuperable bar. She resists his reasoning,

and insists upon his going in pursuit of Miss Wilmot. He complies: and, visiting his uncle, finds a letter from Mary, which had been forgotten by the good folks, and lain for months in a drawer. In this letter she renounces her pretensions to him in favour of the youth, beauty, virtues, and fortune of Clara Howard. She displays her determination of retiring to some retreat, where he shall not be able to find her. In this letter is found an order for the five thousand dollars.

Clara, by letter, persists in her resolution of sacrificing her love to the merits of Mary: and Edward's pride being piqued by her determination, and her mode of expressing it, he sets off from Philadelphia, with a view of burying himself in the western states; but is stopped by a fever, produced by plunging into the Schuylkill to save a drowning fellow-traveller.

Clara's heroism vanishes at the news of Edward's disastrous situation; and she is willing to give up her scruples on Mary's account, provided she can bring back Edward safe to her arms. Circumstances lead to inquiries respecting Mary's parents; and she proves to be a relative of Mrs. Howard. The story of the parents forms an interesting episode.

In the mean time, an explanation takes place

between Mary Wilmot and Mrs. Valentine, Sedley's sister, by which Mary finds, among other proofs of Sedley's disinterested love, that he had sent the five thousand dollars to young Wilmot, in the hope of being the unknown benefactor of the brother and sister. Mary yields finally to Sedley's perseverance and love, and by that means the scruples of Clara, a second time raised, are dissipated, all difficulties removed, and the novel ends, like a good-natured novel, in the happiness of all parties.

The ingenuity of the reader is left to solve the difficulty of Morton's claim upon Sedley's gift of five thousand dollars. The author gives him no clue. We must suppose that Morton's bill of exchange never reached Wilmot: and for the coincidence in date and amount, we must resort to that experience of extraordinary coincidences which authentic record affords us.

Clara Howard was the last of the novels written by Mr. Brown during his residence in New York, and the last but one which he published. Before I notice Jane Talbot, his last work of this species, I will proceed to mention some circumstances of a biographical nature connected with his return to his native city as a place of permanent residence, and that change in his situation

and mode of life which arose from his becoming a husband and a father.

In the month of April, 1799, Mr. Brown published the first number of "The Monthly Magazine and American Review." This work was continued with great industry and ability, until the end of the year 1800. Mr. Brown wrote incessantly for his magazine, if we may judge by the quantity he published of his original composition in it, and yet were we to judge by the number and magnitude of his other publications during the same period, we might suppose that the periodical work received but a small part of his attention. The fact is, that the rapidity of his composition can scarcely be paralleled.

In June 1799, Mr. Brown made an excursion into Connecticut. He thus journalises while at Middletown.

"I expected to write but little during my absence from New York; little more at least than letters. To relate all the adventures that shall befall me, and to record all the observations I shall make, will require far more time, and cost more labour than my indolence will permit. I have indeed a scheme in view for preserving the impressions which this journey shall make, in a

way that may serve a public and private purpose. Connecticut has never been described, and surely merits a description.

"I had many reasons for desiring to accompany my friend in this excursion. Some of them I shall not mention, nor weigh in critical scales their propriety. The recreations of the country, the interesting spectacle of New England manners, the review of scenes intimately connected with the existence of E. H. S. and of my dearest friends among the living, were surely of sufficient weight.

"After many delays, we set out from New York, at ten o'clock on Friday morning. The weather was for the most part clear and serene. I had a vigilant eye for passing objects, roads, dwellings, and passengers. My curiosity was awakened by the intention I had formed of describing what I saw. In this respect, my mind has undergone a sudden and memorable revolution. Instead of being as I used to be, sluggish, torpid and inattentive, my eye was watchful and my mind busy in arranging and comparing objects.

"On Saturday we reached Middletown. It was evening, and a bright sky, a smooth road and healthful state of my frame, allowed me to take in all the pleasure which the circumstances

of the time and place were calculated to afford. Never did I receive equal delight from a rural prospect. Yet how much a matter of association and moral sensibility is the sensation flowing from the survey of the grandeur of nature. Had I not had some previous acquaintance with this scene, through the medium of actual observation and books, my sensations would have been widely different and much less lively and exuberant. Had I not anticipated intercourse with those whose society is dear to me, my feelings would have been comparatively mean and insignificant."

While at Middletown, Charles passed his time in the delightful intercourse he had anticipated. He thus describes one of the pleasant excursions which he made in the society of his friends in the neighbourhood of that charming village.

"Yesterday was spent beyond the river. A minute account of this excursion would be useful. Not an incident, however trifling, but would serve to illustrate manners and gratify the curiosity. There is a method of narration, which would make interesting, the most common and familiar theme.

"Mrs. J. her sister, and Miss —— were the females. D—— A—— I—— and myself, ac-

companied them. The fear of bad roads, reptiles, and water, mars the pleasure of many, in excursions like this. I never met with women so totally exempt from these terrors as were our companions. The river was twice crossed—once after night, and in a blustering atmosphere—in a crazy boat crowded with carriages and horses. The road was in some parts of it precipitous and dangerous, and was traversed during our return in the dark. I was a stranger to the way, had bad eyes, and drove with precipitation; yet Miss ——, my companion in a chaise, betrayed not the slightest apprehension or concern. We ascended a hill which, from the abundance of its rattlesnakes, is known by the name of Rattlesnake hill; we clambered over rocks and pits, but the name of snake seemed to affect the females as little as that of butterfly."

After mentioning a visit to Job's pool, the company's dining in a meadow, the perils and fatigues of clambering a mountain, and the extensive view of Connecticut and its beautiful river of the same name "with its turns and dales" enjoyed from the top, Charles concludes his account of the day with the following characteristic reflections.

"This day was full of incidents, and productive of much fatigue; yet I remember it with

powerful and pleasurable emotion. To what cause is this to be ascribed? Does it flow from its social circumstances?

"What a wretched possession is solitude. Intelligence and sympathy beaming from eye to eye, constitute all the happiness of man. Nature owes all her charms to her alliance with images flowing from society."

In the summer of 1800, Mr. Joseph Brown, Charles's eldest brother, whose usual residence was in North Carolina, visited Philadelphia, and passed some time at Princetown, New Jersey. Charles went thither to meet his brother, and on the way passed some agreeable days with a circle of friends at New Brunswick.

He mentions that his brother was anxious for him to go to Carolina, "but," says he, "I am reluctant to comply. I know not why, scarcely. Seldom less happy than at present. Seldom has my prospect been a gloomier one. Yet it may shine when least expected."

On a former occasion Mr. Brown had thus expressed himself, upon a topic of great importance to human happiness. "My conceptions of the delights and benefits connected with love and and marriage, are exquisite. They have swayed most of my thoughts, and many of my actions, since I arrived at an age of reflection and matu-

rity. They have given birth to the sentiment of love, with regard to several women. Mutual circumstances have frustrated the natural operations of that sentiment in several instances. At present I am free. None of those with whom I recently associated, have any claims upon me, nor have I any upon them." But about the time that he rejected his brother's solicitations to visit Carolina, or soon after, he conceived an attachment to the lady who afterwards became the source of his chief happiness.

In the summer of 1801, Charles was pleasantly occupied for some weeks in travelling with an amiable and intelligent companion through parts of the states of New York, Massachusetts and Connecticut. He has left us the following account of his voyage up the Hudson.

July 7, 1801.

"Very suddenly conceived the design of voyaging up the Hudson river, as far as Albany. Had heard much of the grandeur of its shores, but never had gone above ten miles from New York. My friend C. having some leisure, was willing to adventure for ten days or a fortnight, and I having still more, and being greatly in want of air and exercise, agreed to accompany him. We found a most spacious and well-furnished

vessel, Captain R——, in which we embarked at sun-set this day. The wind propitious and the air wonderfully bland.

"We bade adieu to our friends B——, J——, and D——. I took my post at the stern, and found much employment for my feelings, in marking through the dusk, the receding city and the glimmering lights; first of quays and avenues, and afterwards of farms and villages. It is just three years since my visit to New York, in 1798, an interval replete with events, various and momentous; some of them humiliating and disastrous, but, on the whole, leading me to my present situation in which I have reason for congratulation.

July 8, 1801.

"I write this seated in the cabin, from the windows of which we have a view of wooded slopes, rocky promontories and waving summits. Our attention has been, for some time, fixed upon Stony Point, a memorable post in the late war, a spot familiar to my ears since my infancy, but which I have now seen for the first time. It is a rocky and rugged mass advancing into the river, the sides of which are covered with dwarf cedars, and the summit conspicuous still with some remains of fortification; a general solitude

and vacancy around it, and a white cow grazing within the ruinous walls, produce a pleasing effect on my imagination. A craggy eminence, crowned with the ruins of a fortress, is an interesting spectacle every where, but a very rare one in America. I much wished to go ashore and ascend this hill, but it was not convenient.

"What are called the highlands of the North river, are a mountainous district, through which the rivers flow for some miles. I had heard much of the stupendous and alpine magnificence of the scenery. We entered it this morning, with a mild breeze and serene sky, and the prospect hitherto has been soft and beautiful. Nothing abrupt, rugged or gigantic. Farms and cultivated fields seldom appear. Six or eight vessels like our own, have been constantly in sight, and greatly enliven the scene.

"We are now at anchor: have just dined. My companions are gone to sleep. The utmost stillness prevails. Nothing to be heard but the buzzing of flies near at hand, and the cawing of distant crows. We lie surrounded on all hands by loftier ridges than I ever before saw bordered by water.

"We have formed various conjectures as to the height of the summits. The captain's statements of five and six hundred feet are extrava-

gant. Three hundred would be nearer the truth. Few or none of them are absolute precipices, but most of them are steep, and not to be scaled without difficulty.

" I have gazed at the passing scene from Stony Point to West Point, with great eagerness, and till my eye was weary and pained. How shall I describe them? I cannot particularize the substance of the rock, or the kind of tree, save oaks and cedars. I am as little versed in the picturesque. I can only describe their influence on me.

July 10.

" My friend is a very diligent observer, and frequently betakes himself to the pen. Heavy brows and languid blood have made me indolent, and I have done nothing but look about me, or muse for the last two days.

" On Thursday afternoon with a brisk southward gale and a serene sky, we left the highlands. At the spot where the mountains recede from the river, the river expands into a kind of lake, about two miles wide and ten miles long. The entrance is formed by cliffs, lofty, steep and gloomy with woods, while the borders of the lake itself are easy slopes, checquered with cultivated fields, farms, and villages.

" The highlands, from the height and boldness of the promontories, and ruggedness of the rocks, and the fantastic shape they assume, fully answer the expectations which my friends had excited. But the voyage over the lake exceeded whatever my fancy had pictured of delightful. Three populous villages, Peekskill, New Windsor, and Newburg, and innumerable farms decorate its borders.

" Yesterday we moved but slowly, the wind becoming adverse. At noon, we drew into a wharf, at Red-hook, and remained there till evening. My friend and I seized the opportunity of wandering. The river bank is lofty, and wooded as usual, but no wise remarkable.

" Some hours before, a waving and bluish line in the horizon, reminded us of the Kaats-kill mountains. These are seen very advantageously from Red-hook, distant about twenty miles, and appear of stupendous height. Their elevation has been ascertained, but I do not recollect what it is.

" We roamed along the shore and among the bushes, highly pleased with the exercise, and concluded our rambles with a bathing in the river. In leaving the sloop, I left most of my sluggish feelings behind me, and walked enough to make the night's repose acceptable and sound.

" With the tide to favour us we left Red-hook

at eight o'clock, but were obliged to anchor again before morning. At six o'clock my friend and I accompanied the captain ashore, in search of milk and blackberries. I have since seated myself on deck, watching the shore, as the breeze carried us slowly along. My friend is busy with his spy-glass, reconnoitering the rocks and hay-stacks, and surveying the wharfs and store-houses of Lunenburg and Hudson, villages we have just passed. I have observed but little besides a steep bank, roughened by rocks and bushes, occasionally yielding to slopes of a parched and yellowish soil, with poor cottages sparingly scattered, and now and then a small garden or field of corn. A fellow-passenger left us at Hudson, one only remaining, a Mr. H——, of Albany, a well-behaved man, whose attention is swallowed up by Mrs. Bennet's "Beggar Girl."

"The sloop's crew consists of captain, mate, a man and a boy as cook; all orderly, peaceable obliging persons. The cabin being perfectly clean and comfortable, and provisions plentiful and good, we have no reason to regret the delays occasioned by adverse winds, and by calms. I have some vacant moments which a book might amuse. The captain's whole stock consists of a book of navigation, Dilworth's Arithmetic,

and Goldsmith's Citizen of the World. I have looked into the last, but it does not please me. The fiction is ill-supported, the style smooth and elegant, but the sentiments and observations far from judicious or profound.

"The mate has been telling me his adventures. A very crude and brief tale it was, but acceptable and pleasing to me. A voyage round the globe is a very trivial adventure now-a-days. This man has been twice to Nootka, thence to Canton, and thence to Europe and home. He performed one whaling voyage to Greenland, and was fifteen months a seaman in a British seventy-four. His South Sea voyage occupied eighteen months, during which there was neither sickness nor death among the crew."

Here Mr. Brown's intended journal of his journey breaks off abruptly; but in a form between the epistolary and journalising, he continued it, and I will make some extracts. After a few words respecting Albany, he the next day dates from

Lebanon, July 13, 1801.

"An hour ago we arrived at this delightful spot. Delightful it is in every view. The scenery around is sweetly picturesque, swelling

slopes, luxuriant fertility and the wild music of birds, combine to delight our senses while abroad, while the apartments are neat, rustic, and perfectly commodious. Our room looks out upon the neighbouring vallies at the most charming point of view. Methinks I shall leave this spot with regret. To-morrow we propose to leave it.

"We know not yet what they call the springs or baths, and have seen none of the company at this house. I suppose we shall presently be introduced to them at dinner, and employ the afternoon in wandering abroad.

"Our ride hither being over a tolerably smooth road, and through a country that has many indications of being newly settled, such as log huts, trunks of trees piled on each other for fences, men ploughing among the undecayed stumps of trees, and corn growing luxuriantly among tall oaks, which fire and the girdling axe had robbed of their leafy honours, has been very pleasing. In proportion as we approached Lebanon, the slopes become longer, more beautiful and more cultivated, and now, having reached our journey's end, we find ourselves within view of almost every thing that can cheer the heart of man. From the table where I sit, I have a glimpse of a sloping side of a secondary ridge

of the green mountains, at the foot of which Lebanon is situated.

Tuesday.

"The company here are a few invalids. Besides these there are three girls and a young man from South Carolina. The youth has a most unfavourable aspect, but is nevertheless good-natured and intelligent. The ladies are shy, and have nothing particularly attractive.

"Yesterday afternoon C. and I. visited the Shakers' village. This appears to be the paradise of health and tranquillity. Our request to see their garden was complied with, but reluctantly. An old man accompanied us through it, who was easily prevailed upon to give us some account of his creed. The Shakers who occupy this village, are only a branch of the society. Their chief tenet, you know, is the sinfulness of marriage; and the arguments and quotations of this apostle were all directed to this point. They were strange reasonings and whimsical quotations, but delivered with the utmost confidence in their truth.

"I have often regretted that I had not skill in taking portraits. The countenance of our guide, and that of an aged sister who brought us water, were worth preserving.

Thursday, Northampton.

"We left Lebanon on Tuesday afternoon and traversed a very mountainous and beautiful country to Pittsfield. Here we found some scope for curiosity, and very agreeable accommodations. Yesterday brought us to this place, where we find every mark of comfort and opulence. We know nobody, and can therefore seek employment and amusement only in ourselves, in the fields, and the outsides of houses. We might have had letters introducing us at every considerable town in the course of this journey, but proposing to fly along rapidly, we omitted to apply for them. I think we erred, as a friend, for even an half-hour, is of some value.

"We talk with those who chance to be our companions in the stage and at the inn, and gain from them what they know or choose to tell, which of course is but little.

Thursday night, Hartford.

"On entering this town recollections of past visits to this place occurred with some force, and sunk me into not unpleasant meditation. I have been here twice, eight years and two years ago, at the same season as at present, but in very different circumstances.

New Haven, July 18, *Saturday evening.*

"C. was quickly weary of the dusty and dull town of Hartford, and after traversing the most part, agreed to hire a coachee to take us to Middletown before dinner. First, however, we obeyed the invitation of a sign, and went into a stable to see a moose deer. This creature is a native of the northern regions of America, and was remarkable in this instance, chiefly, for the proofs of docility he gave in obeying the keeper's voice."

At Middletown, Charles enjoyed the society of friends whom he esteemed, and in whose company he had passed many happy hours. The next stage of the travellers was New Haven.

Monday morning.

"We have spent almost two days here (New Haven) and, though absolute strangers to every one we meet, have been very much at our ease. We find company in each other of which we have not hitherto been weary. Yesterday in the morning we went to church, and heard Dr. Dwight preach an ingenious sermon to prove the reality of good and bad angels or genii: a very agreeable doctrine, in which the fancy is

more disposed to acquiesce than the understanding.

"In the afternoon we employed ourselves very agreeably in scaling a rock in the neighbourhood, called the East Rock. It terminates abruptly one of the ridges of mountains that range from north to south through Connecticut. It is a very bold and very lofty precipice, and allowed our eye to range over a great extent of sea and land. We lingered on the brow of this hill, and wandered at the foot of it till evening, and returned highly pleased with the grand and romantic scenery we had met with.

"Having nothing else to do, we have traversed this town in all directions, and indulged ourselves in speculating upon all we saw. We have met with several particulars worthy of remark: and my friend is at this moment busy in recording his observations.

"No situation at an inn could be more agreeable than that which we enjoy here. The family are quiet and orderly, and their lodging and provisions excellent. We experience no interruption or intrusion at our meals, or in our slumbers."

Mr. Brown had now made Philadelphia the place of his permanent residence. He was hap-

pily situated, as an inmate with the family of one of his beloved brothers; and his parents resided at a little distance in the same neighbourhood. But his heart was still at New York; for there resided the lady to whom he looked for future worldly happiness.

Miss E. Linn was the daughter of Dr. William Linn, a minister of the presbyterian church, and settled at New York. John Blair Linn, his son, likewise a minister of the same church, was at this time settled in Philadelphia: and, probably owing to the attachment of Charles to his sister, an intimacy was ripened into a permanent and warm friendship between Brown and the young divine. But journies to New York were now looked forward to as the chief good—as the wells of sweet water, and palm-shade in the barren desert of life.

On the first of October, 1803, Mr. Brown gave to the world a new periodical work, entitled the Literary Magazine and American Register. This work was undertaken at the suggestion, and at the risk of Mr. John Conrad, who made a very liberal arrangement with Mr. Brown as the editor. This work was continued five years, and is replete with the effusions of erudition, taste, and genius.

The editor's address on the publication of the

first number, is so characteristic, and so intrinsically excellent, that I will here present it to the reader.

"It is usual for one who presents the public with a periodical work like the present, to introduce himself to the notice of his readers by some sort of preface or address. I take up the pen in conformity to this custom, but am quite at a loss for topics suitable to so interesting an occasion. I cannot expatiate on the variety of my knowledge—the brilliancy of my wit—the versatility of my talents. To none of these do I lay any claim: and, though this variety, brilliancy, and solidity, are necessary ingredients in a work of this kind, I trust merely to the zeal and liberality of my friends to supply me with them. I have them not myself; but doubt not of the good offices of those who possess them: and shall think myself entitled to no small praise, if I am able to collect into one focal spot the rays of a great number of luminaries. They also may be very unequal to each other in lustre; and some of them may be little better than twinkling and feeble stars, of the hundredth magnitude: but what is wanting in individual splendour, will be made up by the union of all their beams into one. My province shall be *to*

hold the mirror up, so as to assemble all their influence within its verge, and reflect them on the public in such a manner as to warm and enlighten.

"As I possess nothing but zeal, I can promise to exert nothing else: but my consolation is, that, aided by that powerful spirit, many have accomplished things much more arduous than that which I propose to myself.

"Many are the works of this kind which have risen and fallen in America, and many of them have enjoyed but a brief existence. This circumstance has always, at first sight, given me some uneasiness; but when I come more soberly to meditate upon it, my courage revives, and I discover no reason for my doubts. Many works have actually been reared and sustained by the curiosity and favour of the public. They have ultimately declined or fallen, it is true: but why? from no abatement of the public curiosity; but from causes for which publishers or editors only are accountable. Those who managed the publication, have commonly either changed their principles, remitted their zeal, or voluntarily relinquished their trade; or, last of all, and like other men, have died. Such works have flourished for a time; and they ceased to flourish, by the fault or misfortune of the proprietors. The

public is always eager to encourage one who devotes himself to their rational amusement: and when he ceases to demand or to deserve their favour, they feel more regret than anger in withdrawing it.

"The world, by which I mean the few hundred persons who concern themselves about this work, will naturally inquire who it is who thus addreses them. 'This is somewhat more than a point of idle curiosity,' my reader will say; 'for, from my knowledge of the man must I infer how far he will be able or willing to fulfil his promises. Besides, it is of great importance to know, whether his sentiments on certain subjects be agreeable or not to my own. In politics, for example, he may be a malcontent: in religion, a heretic. He may be an ardent advocate for all that I abhor, or he may be a celebrated champion of my favourite opinions. It is evident that these particulars must dictate the treatment you receive from me, and make me either your friend or enemy, your patron or your persecutor. Besides, I am anxious for some personal knowledge of you, that I may judge of your literary merits. You may, possibly, be one of those, who come hither from the old world to seek your fortune; who have handled the pen as others handled the awl or the needle: that is, for

the sake of a livelihood; and who, therefore, are willing to work on any kind of cloth or leather, and to any model that may be in demand. You may, in the course of your trade, have accommodated yourself to twenty different fashions, and have served twenty classes of customers; have copied at one time a Parisian, at another a London fashion: and have truckled to the humours, now of a precise enthusiast, and now of a smart freethinker.

"'Tis of no manner of importance what creed you may publicly profess on this occasion, or on what side, religious or political, you may declare yourself enlisted. To judge of the value or sincerity of these professions; to form some notion how far you will faithfully or skilfully perform your part, I must know your character. By that knowledge I shall regulate myself with more certainty than by any anonymous declaration you may think proper to make.'

"I bow to the reasonableness of these observations, and shall therefore take no pains to conceal my name. Any body may know it who chooses to ask me or my publisher. I shall not, however, put it at the bottom of this address. My diffidence, as my friends would call it, and my discretion, as my enemies (if I have any), would term it, hinders me from calling out my

name in a crowd. It has heretofore hindered me from making my appearance there, when impelled by the strongest of human considerations, and produces, at this time, an insuperable aversion to naming myself to my readers. The mere act of calling out my own name, on this occasion, is of no moment, since an author or editor who takes no pains to conceal himself, cannot fail of being known to as many as desire to know him. And whether my notoriety make for me or against me, I shall use no means to prevent it.

"I am far from wishing, however, that my readers should judge of my exertions by my former ones. I have written much, but take much blame to myself for something which I have written, and take no praise for any thing. I should enjoy a larger share of my own respect, at the present moment if nothing had ever flowed from my pen, the production of which could be traced to me. A variety of causes induce me to form such a wish, but I am principally influenced by the consideration that time can scarcely fail of enlarging and refining the powers of a man; while the world is sure to judge of his capacities and principles at fifty, from what he has written at fifteen.

"Meanwhile, I deem it reasonable to explain

the motives of the present publication, and must rely for credit on the good-nature of my readers. The project is not a mercenary one. Nobody relies for a subsistence on its success, nor does the editor put any thing but his reputation at stake. At the same time, he cannot but be desirous of an ample subscription, not merely because pecuniary profit is acceptable, but because this is the best proof which he can receive that his endeavours to amuse and instruct have not been unsuccessful.

"Useful information and rational amusement being his objects, he will not scruple to collect materials from all quarters. He will ransack the newest foreign publications, and extract from them whatever can serve his purpose. He will not forget that a work, which solicits the attention of many readers, must build its claim on the variety as well as copiousness of its contents.

"As to domestic publications, besides extracting from them any thing serviceable to the public, he will give a critical account of them, and in this respect, make his work an American Review, in which the history of our native literature shall be carefully detailed.

"He will pay particular attention to the history of passing events. He will carefully compile the news, foreign and domestic, of the cur-

rent month, and give, in a concise and systematic order, that intelligence which the common newspapers communicate in a vague and indiscriminate way. His work shall likewise be a repository of all those signal incidents in private life, which mark the character of the age, and excite the liveliest curiosity.

"This is an imperfect sketch of his work, and to accomplish these ends, he is secure of the liberal aid of many most respectable persons in this city, and New York. He regrets the necessity he is under of concealing these names, since they would furnish the public with irresistible inducements to read, what, when they had read, they would find sufficiently recommended by its own merits.

"In an age like this, when the foundations of religion and morality have been so boldly attacked, it seems necessary, in announcing a work of this nature, to be particularly explicit as to the path which the editor means to pursue. He, therefore, avows himself to be, without equivocation or reserve, the ardent friend and the willing champion of the Christian religion. Christian piety he reveres as the highest excellence of human beings, and the amplest reward he can seek, for his labour, is the consciousness of having, in some degree, however inconsider-

able, contributed to recommend the practice of religious duties.

" As, in the conduct of this work, a supreme regard will be paid to the interests of religion and morality, he will scrupulously guard against all that dishonours or impairs that principle. Every thing that savours of indelicacy or licentiousness will be rigorously proscribed. His poetical pieces may be dull, but they shall, at least, be free from voluptuousness or sensuality, and his prose, whether seconded or not, by genius or knowledge, shall scrupulously aim at the promotion of public and private virtue.

" As a political annalist, he will speculate freely on foreign transactions; but, in his detail of domestic events, he will confine himself, as strictly as possible, to the limits of a mere historian. There is nothing for which he has a deeper abhorrence than the intemperance of party, and his fundamental rule shall be to exclude from his pages all personal altercation and abuse.

" He will conclude by reminding the public, that there is not, at present, any other monthly publication in America; and that a plan of this kind, if well conducted, cannot fail of being highly conducive to amusement and instruction. There are many, therefore, it is hoped, who, when such an herald as this knocks at their

door, will open it without reluctance, and admit a visitant who calls only once a month; who talks upon every topic; whose company may be dismissed or resumed, and who may be made to prate or to hold his tongue, at pleasure. A companion he will be, possessing one companionable property, in the highest degree, that is to say, a desire to please."

In the same year, 1803, Mr. Brown produced the first of three political pamphlets, which he at different periods gave to the world. It is entitled, "An address to the Government of the United States, on the cession of Louisiana to the French; and on the late breach of treaty by the Spaniards: including a translation of a memorial on the war of St. Domingo, and cession of the Mississippi to France, drawn up by a French counsellor of state."

The supposed French counsellor of state (for the author merely assumes that character, the better to elucidate the truths he wishes to inculcate) occupies the greater portion of the book. He enumerates "all the disadvantages of the war of St. Domingo, and the benefits of the cession of Louisiana;" and displays, most forcibly, the conduct incumbent upon France, as mistress of Louisiana, to pursue for her own interests.

In doing this, the author displays the impor-

tance of Louisiana to any nation possessing it; and the reader sees its immense consequence to the United States, and the evils which would result to them, if that great country and its inestimable river were in the occupation of one of the great powers of Europe.

When speaking of the evils to be dreaded from the introduction of an active European power into Louisiana, it was this expanded and real patriotism which caused Mr. Brown to exclaim—

"No man can look upon these evils with indifference. Yet no wise man will think a renewal of all the devastations of our last war, too great a price to give for the expulsion of foreigners from this land; for securing to our own posterity the possession of this continent.

"We have a right to the possession. The interests of the human race demand from us the exercise of this right. These interests demand that the reign of peace and concord should be diffused as widely, and prolonged as much, as possible. By unity of manners, laws, and government, is concord preserved; and this unity will be maintained, with as little danger of interruption as the nature of human affairs will permit, by the gradual extension of our own settlements, by erecting new communities as

fast as the increase of these settlements requires it, and by sheltering them all under the pacific wing of a federal government."

He thus describes the "terrible evil" of the neighbourhood of an European nation to us. "All on fire to extend their own power; fresh from pernicious conquests; equipped with all the engines of war and violence; measuring their own success by the ruin of their neighbours; eager to divert, into channels of their own, the trade and revenue which have hitherto been ours; raising an insuperable mound to our future progress; spreading among us, with fatal diligence, the seeds of faction and rebellion."—"What more fatal wound," he exclaims, "could befall the future population, happiness, and concord of this new world?"

In the year 1804, Mr. Brown published in England, his last novel, "Jane Talbot." This work has little of the excellence of his previous romances. It is deficient in interest. The author, it is true, is seen in it, and it is therefore worthy of perusal, but I shall decline entering into an analysis of it, after having gone so largely into the merits of his previous romances.

In August of this year died John Blair Linn, D. D. the beloved brother of the lady to whom

Mr. Brown had devoted his affections. Mr. Linn had been called to the first presbyterian church in Philadelphia, in 1799, and had, of course, resided in that city until the time of his death. Miss Elizabeth Linn, with whom Mr. Brown had become acquainted at New York, occasionally resided with her brother.

The marriage of Mr. Brown to Miss Linn took place in November 1804; and he thenceforward became a fixed inhabitant of his native city, enjoying in an uncommon degree that domestic happiness which had always appeared to him as the consummation of human felicity, and for which he was so eminently formed.

In 1805, on occasion of the publication of "Valerian, a Narrative Poem," by Dr. Linn, Mr. Brown wrote "A Sketch of the Life and Character of John Blair Linn," which has been justly admired as a very fine example of biographical composition.

It was not long after, that Mr. Brown conceived the design of a work new to our country, and of great utility both in a literary and political point of view. This was an Annual Register. Mr. Conrad undertook the publication. It was entitled the "American Register," and the first volume issued from the press of the Palmers in 1806.

The death of Mr. Brown alone prevented the

universal circulation of a work so extensively useful, and conducted with such brilliant talents and profound knowledge. That felicity of style, at which Mr. Brown had so long aimed, and which he had so fully attained; that thorough knowledge of history, ancient and modern; that intimate acquaintance with geography, which his early and constant passion for that science had given him; and his general habits of study and investigation qualified him for the historical part of such an undertaking beyond most men.

Five volumes of the American Register were published before the lamented death of C. B. Brown. Besides annals of Europe and America, this work contained an abstract of laws and public acts, a review of literature, a chronicle of memorable occurrences, foreign and domestic scientific intelligence, American and foreign state-papers, and miscellaneous articles.

From the regions of poetry and romance; from visionary schemes of Utopian systems of government and manners, Mr. Brown, like many others, became a sober recorder of things as they are; but he never dismissed from his heart the sincere desire of ameliorating the condition of mankind, or admitted into his political views or speculations, that inveterate bitterness, that illiberal and indiscriminate censure of opponents,

the result of selfishness and disappointment, which so generally characterises our political writers. As Mr. Brown's motives were pure, so his views of political men, measures and events, were unclouded, and his errors are, alone, errors of judgment.

Mr. Brown's second political pamphlet is entitled, "The British Treaty," and is dedicated "to those members of Congress who have the sense to perceive, and spirit to pursue, the true interests of their country."

The third political pamphlet of Mr. Brown was not published until the year 1809, and is entitled "an Address to the Congress of the United States, on the utility and justice of restrictions upon Foreign Commerce, with reflections on Foreign Trade in general, and the future prospects of America."

In this work, as in the Register, Mr. Brown is very happy in stating the arguments for and against political opinions and measures. This felicity proceeded from the acuteness of his perceptions and the clearness of his mind from all foreign or party bias.

After dwelling some time on the subject of the Chinese empire, he predicts that North America will afford a similar example of internal wealth and population in the coming age.

"Our actual territory," he says, "has about the same area. It lies in the same beneficent climate. It is almost equally compact. The surface is far more level and fertile. It is occupied by one language, one people, one mode of general government, one system of salutary laws. Its population is small at present, but our progress to a more than Chinese abundance of produce and people, is no contingent event; it is one of those future appearances, of which the certainty is just as great as of any thing past. Barring deluges almost general, and pestilences that extinguish mankind, or the untimely destruction of the globe itself, *this*, and indeed a great deal *more* than this, *must* happen, because the present limits of our territory are not immutable. They must stretch with our wants. The South Sea only can bound us on one side; the Mexican Gulph on the other; the polar ices on the third; but time, instead of diminishing our intercourse and dissolving our connection with foreigners, will only augment and strengthen them. The other states of the western hemisphere, we shall, of course, approach more nearly; and mix with them more intimately. The gaps of unpeopled waste which now sever them and us will disappear. Our limits will touch. As to the nations of Europe, as they conquered and

peopled this hemisphere, they are destined to conquer and possess and people what remains to be peopled of the eastern world. Hence our mere local proximity will continually increase. Our commercial intercourse will make rapid advances, but its particular relations or conditions must change. It will assume new forms; and while its actual extent will increase, its extent, relatively to our numbers, may possibly, with regard to Europe at least, be diminished.

"These may appear, to some minds wholly occupied with the passing scene, as silly and unseasonable dreams. Yet those who meditate on the present state of things, and find no comfort, may thank him who snatches them away to the future."

This was the last publication of Charles Brockden Brown, and evinces such a vigour of intellect, and an accumulation of knowledge, combined with such rare patriotism, and true benevolence, as seldom fall to the lot of one man.

Mr. Brown left unfinished a system of geography, general and particular, which would have been an invaluable present to the public, and a source of emolument for his bereaved family. Enough of this work is completed to make it a very valuable addition to the author's

favourite science; and measures have been adopted for its publication.

Of his translations from the French, it is needless to speak. To give an English dress to the crude and often unfounded opinions of Volney respecting this country, was neither congenial with the talents nor feelings of Brown.

Consumption, to which he appeared to have a constitutional tendency, had now made such fearful inroads upon his frame, as seriously alarmed his friends. His sedentary inclinations and habits, had assisted the insiduous approaches of this disease, and though for more than two years before his death he had occasionally expectorated blood, he quieted his own alarms and those of his friends, by persuading himself and them, that it did not come from the lungs. His friends frequently, and for a long time, urged him to take a sea voyage, and by change of climate and employment, check if not repulse the enemy, whose ravages they beheld with increased anxiety; but his reluctance to leave his home, for a time so long as is necessary to visit Europe, was so great, that he could not be prevailed upon. At length, like many other victims to this disease, he determined, when too late, on a voyage in pursuit of health. It was resolved

that, in the spring of 1810, he should visit his brother James, who resides in England; but he lived not to see that spring.

In the summer of 1809, he left home for a short time to procure some relief from disease, and to visit his friends in New Jersey and New York. The following, written on the banks of the Hudson, conveys more than any thing his biographer can say:

Hobocken, Friday afternoon.

"My dearest Mary—Instead of wandering about, and viewing more nearly a place that affords very pleasing landscapes, here am I, hovering over the images of wife, children, and sisters. I want to write to you and home, and though unable to procure paper enough to form a letter, I cannot help saying something, even on this scrap.

"I am mortified to think how incurious and inactive a mind has fallen to my lot. I left home with reluctance. If I had not brought a beloved part of my home along with me, I should probably have not left it at all. At a distance from home, my enjoyments—my affections—are beside you. If swayed by mere inclination, I should not be out of your company a quarter of an hour, between my parting and

returning hour: but I have some mercy on you and Susan: and a due conviction of my want of power to beguile your vacant hour with amusement, or improve it by instruction. Even if I were ever so well, and if my spirits did not continually hover on the brink of dejection, my talk could only make you yawn—as things are, my company can only tend to create a gap indeed.

"When have I known that lightness and vivacity of mind which the divine flow of health, even in calamity, produces in some men? and would produce in me, no doubt: at least, when not soured by misfortune? Never: scarcely ever: not longer than an half-hour at a time, since I have called myself man: and not a moment since I left you on Wednesday morning. I then rose with such an head-ache as was likely to maintain its post for the rest of the week; and this circumstance deprived me of any prospect of enjoyment from my journey, while, at the same time, it determined me to go, because this would have made me a companion to you ten times duller than common, and absolutely unfitted me for any New York company.

"I crossed the river, without any particular views, at ten o'clock. I made inquiries about Amboy, but found no stage that was going that way for many hours, and none that was going

nearer than eight miles: and eight miles, in this burning atmosphere, was too much to walk; I could have found my way thither, indeed, by other means, but there was none going from the Hook immediately in that direction, while there was a stage just then starting for Belville. To Belville, accordingly I went in two or three hours. 'Tis a pleasant village on the Passaic, where I staid till next morning. Chance gave me, for companion, a well-disposed, well-informed Virginian, who has been acquainted with Ogilvie these fifteen years, with his wife and her family, and especially with Mrs. Ellis, of whom you recollect O. told us much. A great deal, in fine, of most of those whom that oddity mentioned to us.

"Finding Passaic Falls to be only nine miles form Belville, I went thither, on Thursday. The weather was insupportably hot, and the fatigue of even those short walks which curiosity required, added to my inharmonious feelings, contributed to make the journey rather unprofitable. Glittering water-falls are but dim, and hanging rocks hardly more interesting than a sand-moor, when viewed with misty eyes and aching brows.

"The afternoon was stormy, and the night and following morning cold. This morning I

was set down at Bergen, and came hither to Hobocken, where I have a full view of New York, and can indulge my fancy in what is going forward there, with more facility than twenty miles further off. How have you employed yourself since Wednesday? perhaps you are gone to Haarlem, and may stay till Monday. If so, I shall be disappointed: yet glad too, for my Mary's affectionate heart will be mortified at my precipitate return. And yet, there is no spot more salubrious than Greenwich within fifty miles of New York; and the leathern wings of a stage-coach do not carry healing under them.

"Till here, I could not find books, which have, with me, great efficacy in beguiling body of its pains, and thoughts of their melancholy, in relieving head and heart of their aches.

"Are there any letters lying for me from home? What may not have happened there in three long days! Death—funeral—interment, have room enough in that time. A thousand mishaps may take place within the compass of three long summer days. I am strongly tempted to cross immediately, and would, if I could recross before night: for I am ashamed to present myself before you, before the week is fairly gone. In a few hours I might receive letters and meet

you both. I am afraid, when the next horn sounds, I shall find the temptation irresistible."

On the 10th of November, 1809, he was attacked by a violent pain in his side, for which he was bled, and retired to his chamber to be nursed, as he thought, for a few days. From this time to the twenty-second of February, he was confined to his room; his sufferings were then relieved by death. During this long confinement, he scarcely ever enjoyed ease, and sometimes suffered greatly, yet he never uttered a murmur or impatient exclamation, and scarcely a complaint.

Such is the testimony of one who witnessed, with the tenderest anxiety, his protracted sufferings,—his beloved companion, his nurse, his wife.

From the same source the following particulars of the illness and death of this lamented man is derived.

"He always felt for others more than for himself, and the evidences of sorrow in those around him, which could not at all times be suppressed, appeared to affect him more than his own sufferings. Whenever he spoke of the probability of a fatal termination to his disease, it was in an indirect and covered manner, as "you must do so and so when I am absent;" or "when I

am asleep." He surrendered not up one faculty of his soul but with his last breath. He saw death in every step of his approach, and viewed him as a messenger that brought with him no terrors. He frequently expressed his resignation; but his resignation was not produced by apathy or pain, for while he bowed with submission to the Divine will, he felt, with the keenest sensibility, his separation from those who made this world but too dear to him. Towards the last, he spoke of death without disguise, and appeared to wish to prepare his friends for the event, which he felt to be approaching. A few days previous to his change, sitting up in the bed, he fixed his eyes on the sky, and desired not to be spoken to until he first spoke. In this position, and with a serene countenance, he continued for some minutes, and then said to his wife, "When I desired you not to speak to me, I had the most transporting and sublime feelings I ever experienced. I wanted to enjoy them, and know how long they would last;" concluding with requesting her to remember the circumstance.

On the morning of the 19th of February, 1810, it was observed that a change for the worse had taken place. He thought himself dying, and desired to see all his family, and

spoke to each in the tenderest and most affectionate manner. He, however, remained in this dying state until the 22d, frequently conversing with his friends, in perfect possession of his faculties to the last.

Thus at the age of thirty-nine, died Charles Brockden Brown, taken from the world at a time when the mass of knowledge which he had acquired by unwearied but desultory reading, and by acute and accurate observation, being preserved by a strong memory and marshalled by an uncommonly vigorous understanding, was fitted, with the aid of his perseverance and zeal in the cause of virtue, to have conferred the most important benefits upon his fellow men.

His loss to his immediate relatives may be imagined by those who have read the preceding pages; a just notion of it cannot be conveyed by his biographer in a summary view of his character. He had ever been an object of the most ardent affection to his own family, and became equally dear to the relatives of his wife. Her sisters were adopted as his own, and on the loss of their father, *he* became a father to them. Ever ready to interest himself for the unfortunate, to advise the unwary, to assist and encourage all; how peculiarly dear must such a man have been to those who were peculiarly dear to him!

Though attached to the seclusion of the closet; though he would for hours be absorbed in architectural studies, measuring proportions with his compasses, and drawing plans of Grecian temples or Gothic cathedrals, monasteries or castles; though addicted to every kind of abstraction, and attached by habit to reverie; he would break off with the utmost ease from these favourite occupations of his mind, and enter into conversation on any topic with a fluency and copiousness which approached to the truest eloquence. He was never dictatorial or intrusive; and although pleased when holding discourse, and conscious of superior colloquial talents, he was among men of the world, or loud and long talkers, generally silent, though not perhaps a listener. Though not imposing in personal appearance, and with great simplicity of manners, he was winning in his address, and made friends of both sexes wherever he felt that the object was worthy. It is not an eulogium of Mr. Brown, but memoirs of his life, and some account of his writings, that I have wished to present to the reader: and if the impression of his character made by the foregoing pages, is not that of a man of uncommon acquirements, superior talents, amiable manners, and exalted virtues, it is owing to want of skill in his biographer.

LETTERS

FROM CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN

TO HIS FRIENDS.

LETTERS FROM C. B. BROWN.

TO W. DUNLAP.

Philadelphia, Nov. 28, 1794.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

How many weeks have elapsed since you left us, and since you requested me to write to you some comments both upon your performance and the representation of it. Better late than never, is an excellent adage; and when men have delayed the performance of their duty, instead of prolonging the breach by elaborate apologies, they had much better apply themselves forthwith to the discharge of it, that being the best reparation that can possibly be made for past neglect.

But what, my friend, shall I say upon this interesting subject? You yourself were present at the performance of the piece; you know how little the theatrical people are entitled to encomiums; what, therefore, could justify your friends

here, in publishing their sentiments upon the acting: the public could judge of the intrinsic merits of the tragedy only as it was performed. How defective must their judgment therefore be, since their knowledge must be so imperfect.

My imagination is too undisciplined by experience to make me relish theatrical representations. I cannot sufficiently abstract my attention from accompanying circumstances and surrounding objects. Custom, or a differently constituted fancy, enables others to distinguish and separate with ease the dramatic and theatrical.

My sufferings during that evening were such as to make me unalterably determine never to be an author. That, indeed, was before scarcely possible; but if every other circumstance were favourable, the dread of being torn and mangled by the play-house gentry, either of the stage or pit, would sufficiently damp my ardour.

You cannot expect that I should say any thing about the play itself. Undistinguishing encomiums must be as disagreeable to you to hear as fruitless in me to utter. Not having the piece before me, I can recollect only the general impression; that indeed would give just occasion for panegyric, which, however delightful it would be to me to bestow, would perhaps be unpleasing to the delicacy of my friend. Parti-

cular animadversions would require me to recollect particular lines and passages, for which purpose I confess my memory is not sufficiently tenacious.

I suppose you proceed, with your wonted celerity, in the career of composition. Has epic poetry been entirely neglected? and has no progress been made in the song which you have consecrated to the fame of Aristomenes?

It used to be a favourite maxim with me, that the genius of a poet should be sacred to the glory of his country; how far this rule can be reduced to practice by an American bard; how far he can prudently observe it, and what success has crowned the efforts of those, who, in their compositions, have shown that they have not been unmindful of it, is perhaps not worth the inquiry.

National songs, strains which have a peculiar relation to the political or religious transactions of the poet's country, seem to be the most precious morsels, which do not require a dissatisfying brevity, nor preclude the most exalted flights of genius: for in this class I rank the Iliad and Æneid, and Orlando (the last is a truly national song, since the streets of every Italian city have re-echoed with it for this hundred years or two) as well as Chevy Chase, or the song of Roland.

Does it not appear to you, that to give poetry

a popular currency and universal reputation, a particular cast of manners and state of civilization is necessary? I have sometimes thought so; but perhaps it is an error, and the want of popular poems argues only the demerit of those who have already written, or some defect in their works, which unfits them for every taste or understanding.

Remember me affectionately to your family, and I will write speedily to Elihu. Tell him, he must not be offended by my long silence.

Yours, affectionately,

C. B. B.

TO A. BROWN.

New York, December 20, 1798.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

What excuse to make for my long silence, I know not, unless the simple truth be sufficient for the purpose. Some time since, I bargained with the publisher of Wieland for a new performance, part of which only was written: and the publication commencing immediately, I was obliged to apply with the utmost diligence to the pen, in order to keep pace with the press. Absorbed in this employment, I was scarcely conscious of the lapse of time; and, when the

days's task was finished, felt myself thoroughly weary and unfit for a continuance of the same employment in any new shape.

I call my book Ormond; or, The Secret Witness. I hope to finish the writing and the publication together, before new-year's-day, when I shall have a breathing spell.

Together with your letter, I received one from M., proposing the publication of Mervyn, on the terms, and in the manner, mentioned by you. I wrote him an immediate answer, assenting, perhaps, too hastily, to the publication; and promising, when my present engagements were fulfilled, to finish the Adventures of Arthur Mervyn. He has not noticed the receipt; and I am half-inclined to suspect that it has miscarried, from the few words subjoined by you for my use, to your letter to Z.

Proposals have been issued here for the publication of a Monthly Magazine, of which I am to be the editor, and whose profits are to belong to me. The uncommon zeal of my friends here promises success to this project. If it answer expectation, it will commence in February or March. This scheme, if it answer in any tolerable manner, will be very profitable.

Yours, &c.

C. B. B.

TO A. BROWN.

Extract of a Letter, dated New York, Jan. 1, 1799.

DEAR BROTHER,

I have neither wife nor children, who look up to me for food: and, in spite of all refinements, conjugal and paternal cares can never be fully transferred to one who has neither offspring nor spouse.

However this be, I will not determine. The lessons of fortitude, perhaps, are more easy to be taught than to be practised: but this does not diminish their value. This you will admit; but will probably add that there is only vanity or folly in inculcating a lesson which the character or circumstances of the scholar disable him from learning.

As to me, the surface of my life would be thought, by most observers, tolerably smooth. I rise at eight; am seated by a comfortable fire; breakfast pleuteously and in quiet, and with a companion who is a model of all the social and domestic virtues. All personal and household services are performed for me, without the trouble of superintendence and direction. The writing occupation is pursued, with every advantageous circumstance of silence, solitude, pure air, cleanliness, and warmth.

When my voluntary and variable task is finished, I may go into the society of those from whom I derive most benefit and pleasure. That I am blind to the benefits of this condition must not be supposed. That mere external ease, and temporary accommodation, are sufficient to afford a reasonable being happiness, must not be imagined. To forbear remembrance of the past, or foresight of the future—or to confine our view to so small a part of our condition as consists in food, raiment and repose, is no argument of wisdom. These incidents have small place in the thoughts of a rational man: but I will not carry you, at present, beyond these; or enter into all these subtilties of sensation and reflection, which, in spite of wealth, would make me sad—and, in spite of poverty, would make me cheerful.

It is time to end this letter. To write it, was the first employment of the new year, and will be the sole employment of the kind that will take place on this day. It is an holy-day, and, as such, it shall be passed away. Absurd enough, you will say, to make idleness a medium of amusement or an auxiliary to sanctity.

On this day, all the world is busied in visiting, and congratulation and feasting. I believe I shall, in this instance, act, in some degree, like all the world.

Adieu, C. B. B.

TO JAMES BROWN.

New York, July 26, 1799.

DEAR BROTHER,

I am not sure that the present disposition of my thoughts and feelings is the most favourable for writing to you; I have no momentous intelligence; no tidings of personal, domestic, or professional revolutions to communicate, yet this appears to be at present the most easy and agreeable employment, and whether I have much or little to say, to hear from me will doubtless give you pleasure.

The heat here has lately been excessive, and I have suffered much exhaustion of my strength on this account. My alacrity of spirits and mental vigour have partaken of this kind of decay. I have had much pen-work to perform, and much still remains to be performed, and though I have applied myself to my tasks with diligence, it has not been with all the desirable cheerfulness. I am likewise influenced by the general dejection and inquietude which at this moment overspreads the city, in consequence of the indubitable re-appearance of pestilence among us.

Several cases, adjacent to each other, and near the quay in which Pine-street terminates, whose symptoms are undoubted, have appeared

within the last three days. The nature of this disease is plain, and my medical friend Miller assures me that our destiny, for this summer, is fixed. He believes that business will be at an end in the course of two or three weeks, and that in that time, it will behove those to consult their safety by flight, who are able to do it.

My sensations, in this state of things, are so different from my sensations last summer, that I look back with astonishment. I do not wonder that I then remained in the city, but that my mind retained its tranquillity in the midst of perils the most imminent; that I could muse and write cheerfully in spite of the groans of the dying and the rumbling of hearses, and in spite of a thousand tokens of indisposition in my own frame, is now almost incredible. I perceive that this tranquillity and courage is utterly beyond my reach at present. I rejoice that there will be no domestic or social ties making me desert the city with reluctance. Those friends who then were as hardy as myself are already alarmed, and all those whose safety is particularly dear to me, will vanish from this scene as well as myself.

You may expect to be minutely and speedily acquainted with the state of things among us, and of my situation and views.

I ought long since to have written to the C.'s and P.'s. Remember me affectionately to them.

You may shew them this letter when you meet with them.

I am afraid that M. has projected the printing of Huntley on too large a scale, though perhaps he is the best qualified to judge.

Whither I shall go when pestilence comes, I am not certain. I shall probably, however, accompany J. up the North river to Albany, and perhaps to Niagara: all, however, is as as yet uncertain.

Farewell,

C. B. B.

TO JAMES BROWN.

New York, Feb. 15, 1799.

DEAR BROTHER,

I know not why I suffered your last letter to remain so long unanswered. Its hints respecting the catastrophe of Arthur Mervyn, were worthy of particular attention. Had I seen reason to approve of the alteration which you recommend, I should have written more speedily. Arthur is intended as an hero whose virtue, in order to be productive of benefit to others, and felicity to himself, stands in no need of riches. You may remember that he originally appears, in a pennyless condition. He is afterwards in possession of some thousand dollars. To maintain consist-

ency and congruity, it was necessary that this sum should be lost. You must judge whether the mode of destroying the notes, is not consistent with his previous character, and with probability: to excite and baffle curiosity, without shocking belief, is the end to be contemplated. I have endeavoured to wind up the reader's passions to the highest pitch, and to make the catastrophe, in the highest degree, unexpected and momentous.

Twenty thousand dollars are a large sum; but remember, the belief of their being forged reduces the value to nothing, while their power to do mischief is proportionably increased.

I have purposely left an opening for the publication of a second part or sequel. The destiny of Wallace and of Mr. Hadwin is not mentioned in the present work. I intended that Mr. Hadwin, on returning to his family, should be seized with the fatal disease. That the task of nursing him, while struggling with the malady, and of interring him when dead, should, by the fears of their neighbours, be assigned to his daughters. Wallace, by his unseasonable journey, is thrown into a relapse, and dies upon the road. Mervyn, preparing to leave the city, is accidentally detained, and his fortitude and virtue subjected to severer trials than any hitherto related.

The character of Wallace is discovered to have been essentially defective. Marriage with this youth is proved to be highly dangerous to the happiness of Susan. To prevent this union, and to ascertain the condition of this family, he speeds, at length, after the removal of various impediments, to Hadwin's residence, where he discovers the catastrophe of Wallace and his uncle, and, by his presence and succour, relieves the two helpless females from their sorrows and their fears. Marriage with the youngest, and the death of the elder by a consumption and grief, leave him in possession of competence, and the rewards of virtue. This scheme, as you see, required the destruction of the bills.

I have committed a very gross error, which possibly the state of publication will permit you to rectify. On leaving the house, formerly Thetford's, Arthur is made to assert that one in fifteen of the whole population, dies daily. One in five hundred is nearer the truth, but I wish you would expunge the sentence.

How does the publication proceed? I shall not be at all surprised if M. obtains fewer subscribers than he expected, or goes forward more slowly than he promised. In a case like this, self-delusion is impossible to be avoided.

Instead of industriously employing the last

fortnight, it has been whiled away in desultory reading. I am fettered by suspense with regard to the projected Magazine. The practicability of that scheme will be ascertained in a few days.

My social hours and *schemes* are in their customary state. I heard from our sister to-day, but she does not mention whether you have been at Prince-town, or when you expect to pay her a visit.

Up till eleven, and a-bed till eight, plying the quill or the book, and conversing with male or female friends, constitutes the customary series of my amusements and employments. I add somewhat, though not so much as I might if I were so inclined, to the number of my friends. I find to be the writer of Wieland and Ormond is a greater recommendation than I ever imagined it would be.

I hoped, ere now, to have sent you the latter work, but opportunities have escaped me.

In expectation of hearing from you shortly, and with fraternal remembrances to Armit and his, I must bid you farewell.

C. B. B.

TO JAMES BROWN.

New York, April 1800.

DEAR BROTHER,

I received your letter and the volumes by Mr. D. but not till several days after he received them from you, in consequence of a stop which he made at Woodbridge and Perth Amboy. It is a source of some regret that M. is so reluctant and dilatory in the fulfilment of his promises, but allowances must be made for his indigence on one hand, and his sanguine and promiseful disposition on the other.

Yesterday the due number of copies of No. III. of the Magazine was put on board the stage for your city, where I hope they have seasonably arrived. This once the printers have been tolerably punctual, and, hereafter, I have reason to think that they will be regular and exact in their publication. I know how much depends upon punctuality and regularity, and nothing shall be wanting on my part.

I gave you, I thought, a good reason for the temporary suspension of Calvert. It will, in the ensuing number, be resumed, and I hope not again checked in its course, till its course be finished.

Your remarks upon the gloominess and out-

of-nature incidents of Huntley, if they be not just in their full extent, are, doubtless, such as most readers will make, which alone is a sufficient reason for dropping the doleful tone and assuming a cheerful one; or at least substituting moral causes and daily incidents in place of the prodigious or the singular. I shall not fall hereafter into that strain. Book-making, as you observe, is the dullest of all trades, and the utmost that any American can look for, in his native country, is to be re-imbursed his unavoidable expenses.

I know not whether the advantageous publication of Mervyn (the sequel of it) can be brought about in this city, but shall have it done in the way you mention. The *saleability* of my works will much depend upon their popularity in England, whither Caritat has carried a considerable number of Wieland, Ormond and Mervyn.

Adieu,

C. B. B.

TO R. P.

Philadelphia, Sept. 1, 1800.

MY FRIEND,

I hoped to have met thee in this city, yet that hope was cherished only for my own sake, since

to wish thee in any other place than in the country, would be wishing thee loss of pleasure and of health. Yet this is a maxim to which I have been accustomed to pay no attention; since, without any other guide than inclination, I have changed the residence of one city for that of another much inferior to it in every circumstance of salubrity and scenery.

Place, indeed, is of little, or rather of no importance, in my estimation. What does this indifference argue? In the way in which I am employed, or in the places in which my lot has been cast, my health has been nearly independent of influences merely local. Equally well or ill am I, in town or country, or might I be, if I chose to mingle with my labour practicable exercise. As to the pleasure of pure airs and brilliant prospects, ten minutes walk from my dwelling in New York, always sufficed to place me on a spot, fanned by the purest breezes, and embellished with the widest and most splendid scene that our country can any where exhibit; a scene whose variety, in consequence of Heaven's every varying face, is inexhaustible, and which I, every time, contemplated with more pleasure than the last.

What then were the recommendations of a change? I had no engagements that detained

me in New York, and so I came hither, not to see different scenes, to breathe different airs, but merely to see a different set of faces. I staid in Jersey, at Newark, Brunswick, and Prince-town, half a week, and now have I come back to my ancient neighbourhood.

All the inanimate objects in this city, are uniform, monotonous and dull. I have been surprised at the little power they have over my imagination: at the sameness that every where reigns. A nine months absence has cast upon surrounding objects not a gleam of novelty. All the old impressions seem to exist with their pristine freshness in my memory. Under this sun I discover nothing new, but this sameness pleases not. More irksome, more deadening to my fancy is this city, on its *own* account, than ever. I am puzzled to guess how it happens, but it is of little moment to inquire, since walls and pavements were never any thing to me, or, at least, were next to nothing: social and intellectual pleasures being every thing.

The C.'s are gone to Lancaster or thereaway. I saw them at New York with a pleasure not easily described. Thou hast not heard the history of their journey thither, and their stay there. To me, in its relation to me, it was extremely interesting, and I think of it with very lively feel-

ings. Such incidents as that do not happen every day to me.

Thy T. gives me reason to expect a meeting with thee, ere I depart. That will not be within a fortnight, and then I can say to thee a thousand things, which my pen cannot say at all, or cannot say so well: yet I feel an irresistible inclination to take up the pen, and to inform thee that I am once more in Second and Front Streets.

The last time I saw thee, I was far from giving that satisfaction which a friend might claim. I was unreasonably reserved, and while it appeared that something lay heavy on my heart, my lips were inviolably closed. I saw a letter to my sister in which thou accountest for my silence in a way not very flattering to me, but a way which I do not know how to prove erroneous. Erroneous it surely was, but how to convince thee of thy error, otherwise than by candid explanations, is the difficulty.

And why not practise candour? What lay heavy then; time has made light. What troubled me then, molests me now but little. Such is the variable fleeting nature of this thing called thought. One idea, in spite of every effort to retain it, will gradually loose its hold, and though it still occasionally come in sight, and flit about us, it stings and vexes us no longer. Thus it is,

with that idea which I brought with me from New Jersey, last November, and which spread a cloud over me. It is gone, yet not totally. It revisits me now and then, but holds no formidable place in my thoughts. When I see thee, I will tell thee what it was; I *think* I will. It is a phantastic apprehension that withholds me. If I do not see thee, it will do to be written.

Possibly I may write to thee again before I see thee. I need not say how acceptable will be a few lines from thee to thy friend,

C. B. B.

TO ANTHONY BLEEKER, ESQ.

Philadelphia, October 31, 1801.

DEAR FRIEND,

I need not say with how much pleasure I read your letter from Morristown. I wish I could give you, in return, an effusion equally indicative of a lively fancy and a good heart, but the utmost that I can do, is to thank you for the favour, and entreat a repetition of such letters.

I suppose you have returned, by this time, to the purlieus of Water-street, and are once more seated at your table, with the "Attorney's Vade Mecum" on one side, and the "Muses' Pocket Companion" on the other. I never yet saw you

seated at this table, without some poetical or literary solace within your reach; some conductor to the flowery elysium of the poets, in the midst of the austere guides and crabbed implements of the law. In this respect, it is rare to meet with one that resembles you; who retains the pure taste of a literary devotee, without disrelish and aversion for naked science and mere business.

Pray, how do you come on in your study of French? have you wound yourself into the vitals of the language, and are you familiarised to that labyrinth of exceptions and anomalies which gave you so much trouble when I was with you. A man must have the patience of more than one Job to untwist and unknot such a tangled maze. It was a task to which my perseverance never was equal; yet how many men are there whom the mere pride of the accomplishment has induced not only to acquire the reading of the language, but the ability to write it, and not only that of writing, but of talking it; and for this purpose, have devoted innumerable hours to books, whose whole merit lay in their being written, and to men whose sole commendation consisted in their speaking in French. I suspected you would fail in your pursuit from the unexpected obstacles with which you had to encounter. I suppose there is always, in every pursuit,

a point that may be termed the critical spot; a point where difficulties multiply, as it were, on a sudden, and where the patience or the penetration is put to the hardest test; and this being past, as ships pass a sand-bar in a river, you suddenly glide into still, deep water. Have you, my friend, passed the crisis?

Since you were here, C. has been here. I saw him for an hour, and heard many particulars of his newspaper scheme. I have not heard of the commencement of the publication. Can you tell me in what state it is? I should like to be put down as a subscriber for the *country* newspaper; will you do me the favour to tell him so?

I suppose you will be among the number of occasional contributors—sometimes as politician, and not seldom as a poet. C.'s republic, if I remember right, does not banish the poets. Even bad verses are pleasing to the readers of bad taste: and though good verses are as rare in newspapers as swallows in winter, yet they sometimes are met with, and delight us in proportion to their rarity. Bad verses are no more disreputable to a newspaper, than bad English to a foreigner—because they are naturally expected: but poetry, very middling, in a collection of elegant extracts, is super-excellent here, and surprises us, like just expression from a chimney-sweeper.

I am anxious to know whether our friend J. is returned; but I shall ascertain it by writing to him by this opportunity. This goes by M., who is preparing to carry home with him a *wife*. How strangely that word sounds in relation to M., whom I have been so long accustomed to consider as *the single man*. That is a destiny which, I hope, will come to us all. I should be very sorry to be left farthest behind in the race towards the matrimonial goal: but my sorrow will, I believe, be unmixed with envy. There is no event, I think, if happening under tolerably auspicious circumstances, on which we may more reasonably congratulate our friends.

You see that, notwithstanding my expectations of a southward journey, I am still here. Here I expect to be during the winter, unless I should find, or make, occasion for a week's jaunt to New York; which I sincerely hope to find or make. Meanwhile, believe me your affectionate

C. B. B.

TO MISS ——.

Philadelphia, August 18, 1802.

MY DEAR R.

Well, I hope your Sunday's journey was not very disagreeable. A coach, crowded with eleven

persons, carrying you fifty miles over rugged roads, on a sultry day in August, to a place you never saw before—with no friendly and tenderly-remembered face to shine a welcome on you—how dare I even *hope* that your journey was a pleasant one?

You went away without me, my friend; but you did not leave my *fancy* behind you. Every now and then, during that day, I figured your situation to myself; and when I awoke next morning, *one* of the first things that occurred (nay, I am not sure that it was not absolutely the very first), was that you were safely arrived at your journey's end.

And how does my friend like her new situation? By this time you have begun to be acquainted with the men, women, and trees, that surround you. You have looked, several times, out of your chamber-window on a meadow that lies before it, with the hobbled horse that grazes in it, and the blackberry bushes that border it. You have made more than one visit to the bushes, and regaled very sumptuously on these blackberries. You have grown quite familiar with the stout slices of brown bread, that make their appearance duly at morning and evening; and have not only banqueted on milk, but, milk-maid like, have provided the banquet with

your own hands. The pure airs and sweet smells of your new abode, inspire you with a thousand agreeable reveries. Health and cheerfulness have taken possession of you; and time flies so swiftly, that you look back, and are astonished, that a couple of *weeks*—not a couple of days, have flown away since your arrival at the manor.

Am I a true *seer*, my friend? Sometimes, I must confess, the picture which rises before me, when I think of you, is not quite so captivating. Instead of sound repose, I, now and then, behold nothing but unquiet dreams and tedious watchings. Instead of sprightly thoughts, and the keen appetite that can feast even at a farmer's table, I see nothing but repinings and disgusts—a mind continually musing on the past—an eye constantly intent on the absent. The scene before you is dull and tiresome. The stumblings of an hobbled horse have no power to delight you. Even blackberries display their delicious clusters in vain: you walk among them, merely because you can take no path which is not beset with them; and you pluck them, as you go, for want of thought.

You will pardon the friendly zeal that is anxious to know which of these pictures is the true one. I beg you to write to me immediately,

and tell me, exactly, how you feel, whom you see, and what you are doing—whether the pleasing prospect which I set before you, in our last conversation, has been realized: if it has *not*, I shall not be very much surprised—but I shall be very sorry.

The scene here is very dismal. There is scarcely a soul to be seen in quarters that used to be thronged: yet there seems no reason for those to be alarmed who still remain in the city. I expect to be gone into Jersey next week, merely because the total suspension of business will leave me nothing to do here.

Do not forget your promise to write to me. Remember that, with a generous mind, to *bestow* pleasure is to *receive* it—and that a letter from you, written as fully and as candidly as my affectionate regard for you deserves, will afford uncommon pleasure to your true friend,

C. B. B.

TO MISS ——.

Philadelphia, October 9, 1802.

So, my good R., your brother tells me that you reached home in safety, and in due season. I suppose the tediousness of the way was some-

what beguiled by the agreeable conversation of Mr. E. I should like to have been in his place. The pleasure of accompanying you, together with the pleasures I might hope for on my arrival, and the more agreeable hope of accompanying one of your family back to Philadelphia, would have rendered it, by far, the most pleasing journey I have ever taken:—but fate interposed, and said—"nay."

You will not tell me, I fear, the motive of your hasty journey, but will you not, at least, tell me whether the mystery, whatever it be, has found a satisfactory explanation? Whether, in this change of scene, and under the paternal roof, you are as happy as you hoped or expected to be? Does the angel "consideration" always stand at your elbow, and give you the friendly twitch whenever you are going to say or do a wrong thing? What a privilege would it be to enjoy the constant admonitions of some such friend as this. How much unhappiness would it enable you, my good friend, particularly, to escape.

Caution, forbearance, a constant curb upon the thoughts and the tongue are necessary to the happiness of every human being: especially of the young, and of those who have naturally a warm and impetuous temper; and is not R. somewhat distinguished by such a temper? and

is she not at present in a situation where her own happiness and that of others very much depend upon her circumspection?

What infinitely greater merit is there in that meekness and forbearance which is the fruit of forethought and consideration, than that which is the gift of our mothers; which governs us naturally; and not so much from the exercise, as from the absence, of a strenuous mind. And this merit, R. may be yours. Nature has given you irritable feelings, it is true, but she has given you, likewise, an excellent understanding, and thus enabled you to temper and control those feelings, and thus secure to yourself greater merit as well as greater happiness than can possibly fall to the share of the naturally, insipidly, unreflectingly meek.

But what a preachment is here! I am afraid it will disgust you. I wish you happy, but, alas! have it not in my power to make you so. Cold, inanimated, starch precepts, never pointed out, or facilitated the road to any body. I am not near enough, nor if I were, have I authority enough with you, to play successfully the part of that elbow monitor I have spoken of above.

I rely on your promise to write to me: write me not a short letter, and treat me, I beseech you, without reserve. Tell me all that particu-

larly concerns you, as to one who makes your interest his own, and who, while he is your true friend, cannot but be a disinterested one.

I shall greatly be disappointed if you forget or neglect to write me; and still more so if you treat me not with that confidence to which my regard for you entitles me.

You can enclose any thing for me, in your sister's letters, if she will permit; or, if that mode be inconvenient, you can address to me, by post, as you have already done.

Adieu, God and his angel Prudence, be with you, my friend.

C. B. B.

TO MISS ——.

Philadelphia, Jan. 18, 1803.

MY DEAR R.

Little did either of us dream, when I last conversed with you, under the shade of the hospital sycamores, that, in less than a quarter of a year, all obstacles to your felicity would be removed. In all my reasonings with myself, on the folly of despair, I consider your history as a new argument on the courageous side of the question. I suppose you now congratulate yourself on the

event, whatever it was, which hastened your return to New York. I remember it distressed you much, at one time, and you seemed to have no omens of the consequences which you now see have flowed from it. Had not some urgent motive compelled you to return when you did, you would probably have been here still, and things would have continued in the same state in which they then were.

Your sister tells me that your day is fixed. You and Mr. —— gratify me highly by expressing a wish for my company on that occasion, but that pleasure my present situation denies me. Yet I do not mean that it shall pass over me as a common day. It shall be a solitary festival, and the joy of my friend shall be my joy. It is every one's interest to improve this source of happiness, since it is the purest source: I mean the happiness arising to us from the happiness of others whom we love. But I cannot boast of that benign temper which bestows this sort of happiness on us. At least, a small portion of it has fallen to my share. Small as is my portion, however, it will make me a sincere partaker of the happiness preparing for you.

I paused here for some minutes. A thousand fancies enter my head at this moment, connected with you, but I will not put them on paper. If

I did, you would think me a most impertinent and unseasonable monitor. What business have fears, and cautions and doubts, and admonitions, to intrude themselves at such a time as this? and I,—what title has experience given me to prescribe to others? whence should I have gained such a knowledge of your character, and that of your chosen youth, as would qualify me for a counsellor to either of you? We know that matrimonial happiness depends upon a system of mutual observances and deferences; in yielding and forbearing: in curbing our own humours and conforming to those of our friend: in allowing for incurable foibles in him, and in demanding no allowance for any of our own foibles.

Experience will teach you these, and many other unpalatable truths. Nothing but experience *will*. How earnestly ought your friends to wish that experience, when it comes, may contribute to your happiness, and not your misery: that, when you come to discover which road leads to happiness, you may be able to pursue it, and not be of that unhappy number in whom the clearest convictions have no power to change the habits, or control the temper.

Excuse this sober strain, R. In your joyous fancy, at this moment, gaiety and confidence keep up a perpetual dance. To you, futurity

teems only with bright and golden views. Perhaps Heaven will be particularly kind to you, and permit the spell to remain unbroken for many, many years. It will, if there be any efficacy in the prayers of

Your true friend,

C. B. B.

I hope I shall not lose my correspondent at the same time you lose your name. Tell Mr. —— that in gaining you, he must not rob me. Give him my kindest regards and congratulations. I shall hope to hear from your own hand, when the 5th of February has gone by, that you are as happy as I wish you to be.

TO THE REV. DR. J. B. LINN.

Philadelphia, July 4, 1804.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Mrs. L. gives me the pleasure of hearing that you are safely arrived in New York, and that your journey has somewhat benefited your health. I hope you will return among us, quite a renovated being. I heard with some regret that you had relinquished the plan of crossing the country to Albany, because the way would

be new to you, and because delightful Lebanon lay in the track, whose charming vales and salubrious springs, could not fail of proving a benign restorative to your drooping spirits and shattered frame.

I wrote to you at Boston, in the hope of your remaining there a day or two longer than your letter from that place mentioned. At all events, I knew you would leave word with your friends there to take up your letters and send them after you. Your silence, however, makes me apprehensive that you either omitted that precaution, or that your Boston friends have been remiss; and I am the more uneasy on this account, because my friendship for you gave you good reason to expect that token of my remembrance.

You were very fortunate in leaving Philadelphia when you did. I hardly know how your constitution could have borne up against such an unexampled series of wet, gloomy and tempestuous skies, as we have been tormented with ever since your departure. Even if the eve-dripping clouds extended as far eastward as Connecticut and Massachussetts, the variety and novelty of the scenes around you would somewhat divert, or disarm their evil influence.

I am highly pleased to hear that you have kept something like a journal in your absence.

I long to see it. I wish you would transmit it to me immediately by post, and give me leave to make immediate use of it in the Magazine now in the press. At any rate, send it to me, and through me your family can receive it. I hope you have not been sparing of the pen or of your time; you must have had abundant occasions for remark, and I persuade myself they did not pass by you wholly unimproved.

As to myself and matters here, they have been pretty uniform. The P.'s (our printers) are as punctual, careful, and obliging as possible. The number for June you will probably meet with in New York before your return. I am afraid it will not greatly please you. You will find but a single communication in it (Valverdi); all the rest—original prose, I have been obliged to supply myself, for which I am sorry, for the sake of the credit of the work, as well as of my own ease. The manuscript of Carwin is exhausted, and it was impossible to piece the thread, and continue it in due season for that number. It goes on, however, in the present (for July) the whole original department of which I have been obliged to spin out of my own brain; you will probably find it, of consequence, very dull. The pieces I have already prepared are not few.

As to my own particular condition and feelings, I cannot rejoice your heart by any very agreeable intelligence. I have had less to boast of on the score of health than for some considerable time backward, and the world of business has been darkened by unusual vexations, disappointments, and embarrassments. I, however, endeavour to make the most of the small portion of good that falls to my lot, to think only on the brightest parts of the present scene, and send out hope to explore the future. My mornings, till three o'clock, are passed in Front Street, and for the rest of the day I feel little appetite for any thing but indolence and recreation.

I have received a letter full of respect and compliment, from Kentucky. The writer is a man who has acquired no small credit with the readers of his party, by two publications, an invective against Adams, and an eulogy of Jefferson. He desires their republication in the Magazine, but I mean to write him a private letter, excusing myself, as I can, on the score of our political neutrality.

When you next take up the pen do not forget me. Remember, also, the journal. Give my affectionate regards to S. M. and R.; in all whose concerns, as well as in yours, there is

no one living has a deeper interest than your affectionate

C. B. B

TO W. DUNLAP.

Philadelphia, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

When I recognised your hand in the superscription of your letter, I opened it with pleasing expectations of an intended visit from you. Little did I imagine the kind of information it contained; and yet, after a little reflection, my surprise in a great measure abated. The difficulty in which men of business have been lately involved, could hardly fail of affecting you in the midst of your unprosperous establishment more severely than most others. Your letter is, as usual, too brief for my wishes. I wish you had dwelt a little more upon your prospects and plans for the future. You doubtless have formed some scheme besides the literary one your letter mentions. I am sorry I cannot give you any satisfactory answer on the points you mention. When your letter arrived, C. was out of town. I shall apply to him as soon as he returns, but the application is almost superfluous, as I know pretty well already the state of his affairs.

You may rely upon my seizing the earliest and every opportunity of answering your wishes with regard to him and any other publisher in this city. Before that time, however, I hope you will get into some other occupation more lucrative and permanent than any thing of this kind can be. I wish you to write to me pretty soon, if not immediately, and tell me more of your present situation, and especially your prospects. Though my counsel or my sympathy can be of no service to you, I am exceedingly anxious to know what you are about, and what you design to do. As to myself, my friend, you judge rightly when you think me situated happily; my present way of life is, in every respect, to my mind. There is nothing to disturb my felicity but the sense of the uncertainty and instability that sticks to every thing human. I cannot be happier than I am. Every change, therefore, must be for the worse. My business, if I may so call it, is altogether pleasurable, and such as it is, it occupies not one-fourth of my time. My companion is all that a husband can wish for, and in short as to my own personal situation, I have nothing to wish but that it may last. These feelings would be thought by some, to arise more from the narrowness of my desires than from the abundance of my enjoyments; so much

the better if that were the case, for the more confidence might I then entertain of its duration. I wish your affairs would permit you to visit Philadelphia once more. Meanwhile let me, I beseech you, hear from you. I have little doubt, considering all things, that your next ten years will be happier than the last have been.

C. B. B.

TO W. DUNLAP.

Philadelphia, Nov. 6, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I wish, notwithstanding my neglect of your last, you had favoured me with another, telling me how you had fared, where you have been, and whither you are going. I have been looking for you hourly this fortnight past, agreeable to your plans and prospects, when we parted, but have neither seen you nor heard from you. I must, therefore, though tardily, take up my pen to find you out, and provoke some information from you. What excuse shall I make for not keeping up the correspondence as I projected? I have none, I fear, that you will deem sufficient. When I received your last, my apprehensions and hopes seemed to be monopolized by one domestic image. Some one says that the happiest man is

still miserable, inasmuch as every human good is precarious and pent with danger; and the more he values the goods in his possession, the more fearful is he of the accident by which he is liable to be bereaved of them. My domestic felicities were so great that I shuddered at the approach of an event by which they were endangered. The event, however, came, and instead of depriving me of an adored wife, has added two lovely children to my store. They are sons, counterparts to each other, with all their members and faculties complete; and enjoying, as far as we can judge, after two months trial of life and its perils, the admirable constitution of their mother. Do not you congratulate me on this event? I was always terribly impressed with the hardships and anxieties attending the care of infants, and was at the moment appalled by the prospect of a double portion of care; but when I had seen the little strangers with my own eyes, and beheld the mother in perfect health and safety after all her perils, my terrors were exchanged for confidence: and now after two months experience, I find, and their mother finds, that the two healthy and lovely babes are a double joy, instead of being a double care. And now that I have told you my chief concern, pray tell me yours. Let me know what you have been doing; what new prospects a few months have

opened to you: whether you persist in your scheme of publication, and what success has hitherto attended you: particularly when may we hope to see you amongst us once more.

C. B. B.

TO MISS SUSAN ——:

Philadelphia, 1806.

Odd enough, my dear S. that M. should refer you to me for further entertainment. My dull, cold, formal pen is fit only to write crabbed dissertations or incomprehensible anagrams, and not to please a young lady. Wit and sprightliness in letter-writing, fall, however, to the lot of so few, that I have less reason to repine or be mortified at the want of it myself. Mary is one of those who write with an ease and spirit proper to the occasion, and the accents of a beloved sister would be soothing to your ear, were they much less sweet and engaging than hers are.

I must repeat, after Mary, that your letter tries in vain to be cheerful and at ease, and that heart of thine must be wrung with severe sorrow, when your letters betray it. But where's the remedy? there are some evils that must take their

course, and which are of that aggravated nature, that bad as they may now be, they can only go on growing worse; and desperate indeed would be the situation of those that suffer by them, if we did not come gradually to bear lightly a burthen when we are accustomed to it. I hope no domestic engagement will prevent you from making a journey in the spring. If there be not, then we shall have the pleasure of a visit from you. I cannot express the pleasure I shall have in seeing assembled under the same roof, and that roof our own, the three persons dearest to me upon earth.

Our M. has grown quite a studious body. She makes nothing of devouring two or three volumes in a day: When I see her deeply absorbed in a book, and straining her eyes to get through another page, by the aid of a departing twilight, I almost fancy it is S. herself, whom I have all this while supposed to be M. Indeed the poor girl has no resource, this cold, house-keeping, home-staying weather, but books; as the backgammon table has long ago been destroyed by the children, to whose amusement it was devoted, as soon as they could use their little hands.

You ask, what makes me so busy? I perceive M. has not answered your question, so I will answer it myself. I have undertaken to com-

pose a great book, and have limited myself in my engagements with a bookseller, to one year, within which to complete it. You may easily imagine what a heavy task I have imposed upon myself, when I tell you that the work will require six hours' writing every day (Sunday's not excepted) for a whole twelvemonth, and that I have other engagements, at the same time, upon my hands.

Remember me affectionately to our father and brother. My particular respects to Mr. B. and Mrs. B. If Mrs. B. comes, as you say she has thought of doing, to Pennsylvania, in the spring, I shall have an opportunity of knowing her a little better than I could do at Albany.

Your sister, in writing to you, always recollects your injunction never to talk to you about her children, unless it be barely to tell you that they are sick or dead. I half suspect she was a little mortified at this caution, else she would not have remembered it so opportunely, and observed it so carefully. I do not recollect to have received any caution of this kind, and should not mind it if I had: it should not prevent me from assuring you that they are in charming health and spirits, and give as little trouble as any parent can reasonably wish two infants to give. They have made but little progress in

speaking these two or three months, but when they once begin, they will probably soon acquire the faculty. Adieu, *ma chere sœur*. Keep up your spirits, and look forward to better times. There are many that make your happiness of consequence to their own, but here are three that love you as themselves.

C. B. B.

TO JOHN H. PAYNE.

Philadelphia, Aug. 25, 1806.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

When I parted with you at Albany, I had half a mind to request the favour of a letter from you when you should have entered on your new course of academical life; but I was afraid your short acquaintance would make the request appear to you unreasonable. Besides, you allowed me to entertain hopes of seeing you in a month or two, and then I flattered myself, something like friendship might be grafted on mere acquaintanceship. I accordingly looked for you in Philadelphia, with no small impatience, after your college vacation commenced; but day came after day, and you came not; so I imagined your inclinations had led you a different way. I

should have written to you; for the lively interest I feel in your welfare would have made me disregard ceremony; but unluckily I had no clue to your steps. Your letter came most opportunely to satisfy my curiosity, and I thank you heartily for this agreeable proof of your remembrance.

You do not say how long you propose to stay at Ballston; or whether you have wholly given up your design of coming southward. I long to see you; but confess I have now little hopes of it. The cities, at this season, are equally dull and unwholesome, and your Ballston must abound with every thing that can delight the fancy or the senses. The next vacation, I believe, occurs in winter: and then a journey hither will reward you, perhaps, for the cold and fatigue of the journey. When you come, whenever that shall happen, you must do my little home the favour to make it yours: you will find it the abode of content; and may enjoy the spectacle, not very common, of an happy family. Mrs. B. is as anxious as myself to see you: she takes all your good qualities on my word, and loves you by proxy.

Most sincerely do I rejoice that you find Schenectady so agreeable. I tremble with apprehension, when I think how much of the dignity and

happiness of your whole life depends upon the resolutions of the present moment. Were it possible for a miracle to be wrought in your favour—and that the experience of a dozen years could be obtained without living so long—there would be little danger that a heart, so unperverted as yours, would mislead you. The experience of others will avail you nothing: they may talk, indeed; but till you are as old as the counsellor—and have seen, with your own eyes, as much as he—his words are mere idle sounds, impertinent and unintelligible. Fancy and habit are supreme over your conduct: and all your friends have to trust to, is a heart naturally pure and tractable; and a *taste*, if I may so call it, for the approbation of the wise and good.

When you write next, I hope you will have both leisure and inclination to be particular on the subject of your studies. What are your books and your exercises? What progress do you make?—and what difficulties or reluctances stand in your way? You see I make great demands upon you. I am afraid you will not admit my affection for you as a sufficient pretext for making them; and I have, as yet, no other foundation on which to build my claim.

I have a great deal more to say to you; but I am afraid, judging from the brevity of yours,

that you have no passion for long letters. I will, therefore, stop in due season, and only add the name of your true and warm friend,

C. B. B.

TO MR. J. H. PAYNE.

Philadelphia, Feb. 22, 1809.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have not forgotten you, nor ceased to feel a deep interest in your welfare; nor to make frequent inquiries about you, though our correspondence has so long been discontinued. The "Boston Mirror" is a token of your remembrance, which comes duly to hand, and affords me some basis for conjecture, at least, as to your present situation and pursuits. Will you give me a more full account under your own hand? A great many rumours have reached me, of the truth of which I am extremely anxious for an opportunity to judge.

Two years have passed away since I saw you —a period that seldom makes material alterations in the character, or habits, or destiny of a man past thirty: but they are big with fate, at that unsettled and mutable age at which they have found my friend. Let me know from your own pen, with that candour and sincerity which

were shining qualities in you, when I enjoyed your personal intercourse—how you fare—what two years have done for you?

This is a large demand for one to make who has so few claims upon your esteem and confidence. Nothing emboldens me to make it, but the earnest regard I have for you; though you may reasonably demand more solid testimonies of that regard than this naked assurance of it.

Permit me, warmly to recommend to your acquaintance, my friend Mr. O. who will deliver you this. He is a man, if I am not much mistaken, after your own heart. His merits are those on which you are accustomed to set most value; and higher merits of that kind, I suspect, not even your imagination has ever hitherto set before you.

I am, affectionately, yours,

C. B. B.

TO W. KEESE, ESQ.

Philadelphia, Oct. 16, 1807.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your agreeable letter arrived this moment, and I hasten to thank you for giving us so early tidings of the safety of our dear Rebecca. That

the new comer is not a girl, is, you tell us, a great disappointment to you, and you have been obliged to play the philosopher on the occasion; but, my good friend, one smile of the little stranger, a few months hence, will perform more for your consolation than all the reasonings in the world. You will then bless yourself that the bantling *is* exactly *what he is*. I have often checked myself in forming wishes as to the sex of my children, from the utter uncertainty of their future destiny, be they of what sex they may. Their happiness must depend upon their temper; and mine, so far as it relates to them, upon the opportunity I may have of witnessing their fate after they have reached maturity: and, when I reflect on the innumerable chances against my living to that critical time, I give all wishes to the air. The chances for happiness, in either sex, seem to me nearly equal; yet, as a man, I must necesssrily regard a daughter with more tenderness than a son, provided they are equal in all other respects: an equality, however, which is quite impossible.

You are going to call your son by my name, a compliment that flatters me exceedingly. Yet, for the sake of the little one, I heartily wish *Brown* had a little more music and dignity in it. It has ever been an irksome and unwelcome

sound to my ears, and it is with no less surprise than pleasure that I now find it less worthless to the ears of others than it is to my own. I have sometimes been mortified in looking over the catalogue of heroes, sages, and saints, to find not a single *Brown* among them. This indeed may be said of many other names, but most others are of rare occurrence, while the most common appellation in almost all languages is *Brown*. It must, then, be a strange fatality which has hitherto excluded it from the illustrious and venerable list. Perhaps, your new comer may be marked out by the powers who manage these matters over our heads, as a vindicator of the name. If the event be otherwise, the disgrace may be saved by veiling the ill-fated syllable under the convenient obscurity of an initial.

With affectionate congratulations to you both, believe us ever your's,

C. B. & E. L. B.

MISCELLANIES.

THE PARADISE OF WOMEN, FROM "ALCUIN."

DIALOGUE ON MUSIC.

DIALOGUE ON PAINTING.

THE PARADISE OF WOMEN.

I called last evening on Mrs. Carter. I had no previous acquaintance with her. Her brother is a man of letters, who, nevertheless, finds little leisure from the engagements of a toilsome profession. He scarcely spends an evening at home, yet takes care to invite specially and generally every one who enjoys the reputation of learning and probity. His sister became, on the death of her husband, his housekeeper. She was always at home. The guests who came in search of the man, finding him abroad, lingered a little, as politeness enjoined, but soon found something in the features and accents of the lady, that induced them to prolong their stay, for their own sake: nay, without any well-defined expectation of meeting their inviter, they felt themselves disposed to repeat their visit. We must suppose the conversation of the lady not destitute of attractions; but an additional, and, perhaps, the strongest inducement, was the society of other visitants. The house became, at length, a sort of rendezvous of persons of

different ages and conditions, but respectable for talents or virtues. A commodious apartment, excellent tea, lemonade, and ice—and wholesome fruits—were added to the pleasures of instructive society: no wonder that Mrs. Carter's *coterie* became the resort of the liberal and ingenious.

These things did not necessarily imply any uncommon merit in the lady. Skill in the superintendence of a tea-table, affability and modesty, promptness to inquire, and docility to listen, were all that were absolutely requisite in the mistress of the ceremonies. Her apartment was nothing, perhaps, but a Lyceum open at stated hours, and to particular persons, who enjoyed, gratis, the benefits of rational discourse, and agreeable repasts. Some one was required to serve the guests, direct the menials, and maintain, with suitable vigilance, the empire of cleanliness and order. This office might not be servile, merely because it was voluntary. The influence of an unbribed inclination might constitute the whole difference between her and a waiter at an inn, or the porter of a theatre.

Books are too often insipid. In reading, the senses are inert and sluggish, or they are solicited by foreign objects. To spur up the

flagging attention, or check the rapidity of its flights and wildness of its excursions; are often found to be impracticable. It is only on extraordinary occasions that this faculty is at once sober and vigorous, active and obedient. The revolutions of our mind may be watched and noted, but can seldom be explained to the satisfaction of the inquisitive. All that the caprice of nature has left us, is to profit by the casual presence of that which can, by no spell, be summoned or detained.

I hate a lecturer. I find little or no benefit in listening to a man who does not occasionally call upon me for my opinion, and allow me to canvass every step in his argument. I cannot, with any satisfaction, survey a column, how costly soever its materials, and classical its ornaments, when I am convinced that its foundation is sand which the next tide will wash away. I equally dislike formal debate, where each man, however few his ideas, is subjected to the necessity of drawing them out to the length of a speech. A single proof, or question, or hint, may be all that the state of the controversy, or the reflections of the speaker, suggest: but this must be amplified and iterated, till the sense, perhaps, is lost or enfeebled, that he may not fall below the dignity of an orator. Conversa-

tion, careless and unfettered,—that is sometimes abrupt and sententious; sometimes fugitive and brilliant; and sometimes copious and declamatory;—is a scene for which, without being much accustomed to it, I entertain great affection. It blends, more happily than any other method of instruction, utility and pleasure. No wonder I was desirous of knowing, long before the opportunity was afforded me, how far these valuable purposes were accomplished by the frequenters of Mrs. Carter's Lyceum.

In the morning I had met the doctor at the bed-side of a sick friend, who had strength enough to introduce us to each other. At parting I received a special invitation for the evening, and a general one to be in force at all other times. At five o'clock I shut up my little school, and changed an alley in the city—dark, dirty, and narrow, as all alleys are—for the fresh air and smooth footing of the fields. I had not forgotten the doctor and his Lyceum. 'Shall I go (said I to myself) or shall I not?' "No:" said the pride of poverty, and the bashfulness of inexperience. I looked at my unpowdered locks, my worsted stockings, and my pewter buckles. I bethought me of my embarrassed air, and my uncouth gait. I pondered on the superciliousness of wealth and talents, the awfulness of flowing

muslin, the mighty task of hitting on a right movement at entrance, and a right posture in sitting, and on the perplexing mysteries of tea-table decorum; but, though confused and panic-struck, I was not vanquished.

I had some leisure, particularly in the evening. Could it be employed more agreeably or usefully? To read, to write, to meditate; to watch a declining moon, and the varying firmament, with the emotions of poetry or piety—with the optics of Dr. Young, or of De la Lande—were delightful occupations, and all at my command. Eight hours of the twenty-four were consumed in repeating the names and scrawling the forms of the alphabet, or in engraving on infantine memories that twice three make six; the rest were employed in supplying an exhausted, rather than a craving stomach; in sleep, that never knew, nor desired to know, the luxury of down, and the pomp of tissue; in unravelling the mazes of Dr. Waring; or in amplifying the seducing suppositions of, 'if I were a king,' or, 'if I were a lover.' Few, indeed, are as happy as Alcuin. What is requisite to perfect my felicity but the blessing of health, which is incompatible with periodical head-aches, and the visits of rheumatism;—of peace, which cannot maintain its post against the hum of a school, the dis-

cord of cart-wheels, and the rhetoric of a notable landlady;—of competence—my trade preserves me from starving and nakedness, but not from the discomforts of scarcity, or the disgrace of shabbiness;—of money, to give me leisure; and exercise, to give me health. These are all my lot denies: in all other respects I am the happiest of mortals. The pleasures of society, indeed, I seldom taste: that is, I have few opportunities of actual intercourse with that part of mankind whose ideas extend beyond the occurrences of the neighbourhood, or arrangements of their household. Not but that, when I want company, it is always at hand. My solitude is populous, whenever my fancy thinks proper to people it, and with the very beings that best suit my taste. These beings are, perhaps, on account of my slender experience, too uniform, and somewhat grotesque. Like some other dealers in fiction, I find it easier to give new names to my visionary friends, and vary their condition, than to introduce a genuine diversity into their characters. No one can work without materials. My stock is slender. There are times when I feel a moment's regret that I do not enjoy the means of enlarging it. But this detail, it must be owned, is a little beside the purpose. I merely intended to have repeated my conversation with Mrs. Carter, but

have wandered, unawares, into a dissertation on my own character. I shall now return, and mention that I cut short my evening excursion, speeded homeward, and, after japanning anew my shoes, brushing my hat, and equipping my body in its best gear, proceeded to the doctor's house.

I shall not stop to describe the campany, or to dwell on the embarrassments and awkwardness always incident to an unpolished wight like me. Suffice it to say, that I was in a few minutes respectfully withdrawn into a corner, and fortunately a near neighbour of the lady. * * * * * * *

A week elapsed, and I repeated my visit to Mrs. Carter. She greeted me in a friendly manner. "I have often," said she, "since I saw you, reflected on the subject of our former conversation: I have meditated more deeply than common, and I believe to more advantage. The hints that you gave me, I have found useful guides."

"And I, said I, have travelled farther than common, incited by a laudable desire of knowledge."

"Travelled?"

"Yes: I have visited, since I saw you, the *Paradise of Women;* and I assure you have longed for an opportunity to communicate the information that I have collected."

"Well, you now enjoy the opportunity—you have engaged it every day in the week. Whenever you had thought proper to come, I could have promised you a welcome."

"I thank you. I should have claimed your welcome sooner, but only returned this evening."

"Returned! Whence, I pr'ythee?"

"From the journey that I spoke of. Have I not told you that I have visited the Paradise of Women? The region, indeed, is far distant; but a twinkling is sufficient for the longest of my journeys."

"You are somewhat mysterious: and mystery is one of the many things that abound in the world, for which I have a hearty aversion."

"I cannot help it. It is plain enough to me and to my good genius; who, when I am anxious to change the scene, and am unable to perform it by the usual means, is kindly present to my prayers, and saves me from three inconveniences of travelling—toil, delay, and expense. What sort of vehicle it is that he provides for me—what intervals of space I have overpassed—and what is the situation of the inn where I repose, relatively to this city, or this orb—such is the rapidity with which I move, that I cannot collect from my own observation. I may sometimes remedy my ignorance in this respect by a com-

parison of circumstances: for example, the language of the people with whom I passed most of the last week, was English: this was a strong symptom of affinity. In other respects the resemblance was sufficiently obscure. Methought I could trace in their buildings the knowledge of Greek and Roman models: but who can tell that the same images and combinations may not occur to minds distant and unacquainted with each other, but which have been subject to the same enlightened discipline? In manners and sentiments, they possessed little, in common with us. Here I confess my wonder was most excited. I should have been apt to suspect that they were people of some other planet; especially as I had never met in my reading with any intimations of the existence of such a people on our own. But, on looking around me, the earth and sky exhibited the same appearances as with us. It once occurred to me, that I had passed the bourne which we are all doomed to pass, and had reached that spot from which, as the poet assures, no traveller returns. But since I have returned, I must discard that supposition. You will say, perhaps, when you are acquainted with particulars, that it was no more than a sick man's dream, or a poet's reverie. Though I myself cannot adopt this opinion (for who can discredit

the testimony of his senses?) yet it must be owned that it would most naturally suggest itself to another; and therefore I shall leave you in possession of it."

"So, you would persuade me," said the lady, "that the journey you meant to relate, is in your own opinion real; though you are conscious that its improbability will hinder others from believing it."

"If my statement answer that end, be it so. The worst judge of the nature of his own conceptions is the enthusiast. I have my portion of ardour, which solitude seldom fails to kindle into blaze. It has drawn vigour and activity from exercise. Whether it transgresses the limits which a correct judgment prescribes, it would be absurd to inquire of the enthusiast himself. If the perceptions of the poet be as lively as those of sense, it is a superfluous inquiry whether their objects exist really, and externally. This is a question which cannot be decided, even with respect to those perceptions which have most seeming and most congruity. We have no direct proof that the ordinary objects of sight and touch have a being independent of these senses. When there is no ground for believing that those chairs and tables have any existence but in my own sensorium, it would be rash to

affirm the reality of the objects which I met, or seemed to meet with, in my late journey. I see and hear, is the utmost that can be truly said at any time. All that I can say is—that I saw and heard."

"Well," returned the lady, "that as you say, is a point of small importance. Let me know what you saw and heard without further ceremony."

"I was witness to the transactions of a people, who would probably gain more of your approbation than those around you can hope for. Yet this is, perhaps, to build too largely on my imperfect knowledge of your sentiments: however that be, few things offered themselves to my observation, which I did not see reason to applaud, and to wonder at.

"My curiosity embraced an ample field. It did not overlook the condition of women. That negligence had been equally unworthy of my understanding and my heart. It was evening and the moon was present when I lighted, I know not how or whence, on a smooth pavement encompassed by structures that appeared intended for the accommodation of those whose taste led them either to studious retirement or to cheerful conversation. I shall not describe the first transports of my amazement, or dwell

on the reflections that were suggested by a transition so new and uncommon, or the means that I employed to penetrate the mysteriousness that hung around every object, and my various conjectures as to the position of the isle, or the condition of the people among whom I had fallen. I need not tell how, in wandering from this spot, I encountered many of both sexes who were employed in awakening, by their notes, the neighbouring echoes, or absorbed in musing silence, or engaged in sprightly debate; how one of them remarking, as I suppose, the perplexity of my looks, and the uncouthness of my garb, accosted me and condescended to be my guide in a devious tract, which conducted me from one scene of enchantment to another. I need not tell how, by the aid of this benevolent conductor, I passed through halls whose pendent lustres exhibited sometimes a groupe of musicians and dancers, sometimes assemblies where state affairs were the theme of sonorous rhetoric, where the claims of ancient patriots and heroes to the veneration of posterity were examined, and the sources of memorable revolutions scrutinized, or which listened to the rehearsals of annalist or poet, or surveyed the labours of the chemist, or inspected the performances of the mechanical inventor. Need I expatiate on the felicity of that plan,

which blended the umbrage of poplars with the murmur of fountains, enhanced by the gracefulness of architecture?"

"Come, come," interrupted the lady, "this perhaps may be poetry, but though pleasing, it had better be dispensed with. I give you leave to pass over these incidents in silence: I desire merely to obtain the sum of your information, disembarrassed from details of the mode in which you acquired it, and of the mistakes and conjectures to which your ignorance subjected you."

"Well," said I, "these restraints, it must be owned, are a little hard, but since you are pleased to impose them I must conform to your pleasure. After my curiosity was sufficiently gratified by what was to be seen, I retired with my guide to his apartment. It was situated on a terrace which overlooked a mixed scene of groves and edifices, which the light of the moon that had now ascended the meridian, had rendered distinctly visible. After considerable discourse, in which satisfactory answers had been given to all the inquiries which I had thought proper to make, I ventured to ask, 'I pray thee, my good friend, what is the condition of the female sex among you? In this evening's excursion I have met with those, whose faces and voices seemed

to bespeak them women, though as far as I could discover they were distinguished by no peculiarities of manners or dress. In those assemblies to which you conducted me, I did not fail to observe, that whatever was the business of the hour, both sexes seemed equally engaged in it. Was the spectacle theatrical? The stage was occupied sometimes by men, sometimes by women, and sometimes by a company of each. The tenor of the drama seemed to be followed as implicitly as if custom had enacted no laws upon this subject. Their voices were mingled in the choruses: I admired the order in which the spectators were arranged. Women were, to a certain degree, associated with women, and men with men; but it seemed as if magnificence and symmetry had been consulted, rather than a scrupulous decorum. Here no distinction in dress was observable, but I suppose the occasion dictated it. Was science, or poetry, or art, the topic of discussion? The two sexes mingled their inquiries and opinions. The debate was managed with ardour and freedom, and all present were admitted to a share in the controversy, without particular exceptions or compliances of any sort. Were shadows and recesses sought by the studious few? As far as their faces were distinguishable, meditation had selected her

votaries indiscriminately. I am not unaccustomed to some degree of this equality among my own countrymen, but it appears to be far more absolute and general among you; pray what are your customs and institutions on this head?'

"'Perhaps,' replied my friend, 'I do not see whither your question tends. What are our customs respecting women? You are doubtless apprised of the difference that subsists between the sexes. That physical constitution which entitles some of us to the appellation of male, and others to that of female, you must know. You know its consequences. With these our customs and institutions have no concern; they result from the order of nature, which it is our business merely to investigate. I suppose there are physiologists or anatomists in your country. To them it belongs to explain this circumstance of animal existence.

"'The universe consists of individuals. They are perishable. Provision has been made that the place of those that perish should be supplied by new generations. The means by which this end is accomplished, are the same through every tribe of animals. Between contemporary beings the distinction of sex maintains; but the end of this distinction is, that since each individual must perish, there may be a continual succession

of individuals. If you seek to know more than this, I must refer you to books which contain the speculations of the anatomist, or to the hall where he publicly communicates his doctrines.'

" 'It is evident,' answered I, 'that I have not made myself understood. I did not inquire into the structure of the human body, but into those moral or political maxims which are founded on the difference in this structure between the sexes.

" 'Need I repeat,' said my friend, 'what I have told you of the principles by which we are governed? I am aware that there are nations of men universally infected by error, or who, at least, entertain opinions different from ours. It is hard to trace all the effects of a particular belief, which chances to be current among a whole people. I have entered into a pretty copious explanation of the rules to which we conform in our intercourse with each other, but still perhaps have been deficient.

" 'No, I cannot complain of your brevity; perhaps my doubts would be solved, by reflecting attentively on the information that I have already received. For that, leisure is requisite; meanwhile, I cannot but confess my surprise, that I find among you, none of those exterior differ-

ences by which the sexes are distinguished by all other nations.'

" ' Give me a specimen, if you please, of those differences with which you have been familiar.'

" ' One of them,' said I, ' is dress. Each sex has a garb peculiar to itself. The men and women of our country are more different from each other in this respect, than the natives of remotest countries.'

" ' That is strange,' said my friend, ' why is it so?'

" ' I know not. Each one dresses as custom prescribes. He has no other criterion. If he selects his garb because it is beautiful or convenient, it is beautiful and commodious in his eyes merely because it is customary.'

" ' But wherefore does custom prescribe a different dress to each sex?'

" ' I confess I cannot tell, but most certainly it is so. I must likewise acknowledge, that nothing in your manners more excites my surprise, than your uniformity in this particular.'

" ' Why should it be inexplicable? For what end do we dress? Is it for the sake of ornament? Is it in compliance with our perceptions of the beautiful? These perceptions cannot be supposed to be the same in all. But since the standard of beauty, whatever it be, must be one and

the same: since our notions on this head are considerably affected by custom and example, and since all have nearly the same opportunites and materials of judgment, if beauty only were regarded, the differences among us would be trivial. Differences, perhaps, there would be. The garb of one being would, in some degree, however small, vary from that of another. But what causes there are that should make all woman agree in their preference of one dress, and all men in that of another, is incomprehensible; no less than that the difference resulting from this choice should be essential and conspicuous.

" 'But ornament obtains no regard from us but in subservience to utility. We find it hard to distinguish between the useful and beautiful. When they appear to differ, we cannot hesitate to prefer the former. To us that instrument possesses an invincible superiority to every other which is best adapted to our purpose. Convince me that this garment is of more use than that, and you have determined my choice. We may afterwards inquire, which has the highest pretensions to beauty? Strange if utility and beauty fail to coincide. Stranger still, if having found them in any instance compatible, I sacrifice the former to the latter. But the elements of beauty, though perhaps they have a real existence, are

fleeting and inconstant. Not so those principles which enable us to discover what is useful. These are unform and permanent. So must be the results. Among us, what is useful to one, must be equally so to another. The condition of all is so much alike, that a stuff which deserves the preference of one, because it is obtained with least labour, because its texture is most durable, or more easily renewed or cleansed, is for similar reasons preferable to all.

" 'But,' said I, 'you have various occupations. One kind of stuff or one fashion is not equally suitable to every employment. This must produce a variety among you, as it does among us.'

" 'It does so. We find that our tools must vary with our designs. If the task requires a peculiar dress, we assume it. But as we take it up when we enter the workshop, we, of course, lay it aside when we change the scene. It is not to be imagined that we wear the same garb at all times. No man enters society laden with the implements of his art. He does not visit the council-hall or the theatre with his spade upon his shoulder. As little does he think of bringing thither the garb which he wore in the field. There are no such peculiarities of attitude or gesture among us, that the vesture that has proved most convenient to one in walking or sitting,

should be found unsuitable to others. Do the differences of this kind, prevalent among you, conform to these rules? Since every one has his stated employment, no doubt each one has a dress peculiar to himself or those of his own profession.'

" 'No. I cannot say that among us this principle has any extensive influence. The chief difference consists in degrees of expensiveness. By inspecting the garb of a passenger, we discover not so much the trade that he pursues, as the amount of his property. Few labour whose wealth allows them to dispense with it. The garb of each is far from varying with hours of the day. He need only conform to the changes of the seasons, and model his appearance by the laws of ostentation, in public, and by those of ease, in the intervals of solitude. These principles are common to both sexes. Small is the portion of morality or taste, that is displayed by either, but in this, as in most other cases, the conduct of the females is the least faulty. But of all infractions of decorum, we should deem the assuming of the dress of one sex by the other, as the most flagrant. It so rarely happens, that I do not remember to have witnessed a single metamorphosis, except perhaps on the stage, and even there a female cannot evince a more egre-

gious negligence of reputation than by personating a man.'

"'All this,' replied my friend, 'is so strange as to be almost incredible. Why beings of the same nature, inhabiting the same spot, and accessible to the same influences, should exhibit such preposterous differences, is wonderful. It is not possible that these modes should be equally commodious or graceful. Custom may account for the continuance, but not for the origin, of manners.'

"'The wonder that you express,' said I, 'is in its turn a subject of surprise to me. What you now say, induces me to expect that among you, women and men are more similarly treated than elsewhere. But this, to me, is so singular a spectacle, that I long to hear it more minutely described by you, and to witness it myself.'

"'If you remain long enough among us you will not want the opportunity. I hope you will find that every one receives that portion which is due to him; and since a diversity of sex cannot possibly make any essential difference in the claims and duties of reasonable beings, this difference will never be found. But you call upon me for descriptions. With what hues shall I delineate the scene? I have exhibited as distinctly as possible the equity that governs us.

Its maxims are of various application. They regulate our conduct, not only to each other, but to the tribes of insects and birds. Every thing is to be treated as capable of happiness itself, or as instrumental to the happiness of others.'

"'But since the sexual difference is something,' said I, 'and since you are not guilty of the error of treating different things as if they were the same, doubtless, in your conduct towards each other, the consideration of sex is of some weight.'

"'Undoubtedly. A species of conduct is incumbent upon men and women towards each other on certain occasions, that cannot take place between man and man; or between woman and woman. I may properly supply my son with a razor to remove superfluous hairs from his chin; but I may with no less propriety forbear to furnish my daughter with this implement, because nature has denied her a beard; but all this is so evident that I cannot but indulge a smile at the formality with which you state it.'

"'But,' said I, 'it is the nature and extent of this difference of treatment that I want to know.'

"'Be explicit, my good friend. Do you want a physiological dissertation on this subject, or not? If you do, excuse me from performing the task, I am unequal to it.'

"'No. But I will try to explain myself: What,

for example, is the difference which takes place in the education of the two sexes.

" ' There is no possible ground for difference. Nourishment is imparted and received in the same way. Their organs of digestion and secretion are the same. There is one diet, one regimen, one mode and degree of exercise, best adapted to unfold the powers of the human body, and maintain them for the longest time in full vigour. One individual may be affected by some casualty or disease, so as to claim to be treated in a manner different from another individual, but this difference is not necessarily connected with sex. Neither sex is exempt from injury, contracted through their own ignorance, or that of others. Doubtless the sound woman and the sick man it would be madness to subject to the same tasks, or the same regimen. But this is no less true if both be of the same sex. Diseases, on whichsoever they fall, are curable by the same means.

" ' Human beings, in their infancy,' continued my friend, ' require the same tendance and instruction: but does one sex require more or less, or a different sort of tendance or instruction than the other? Certainly not. If by any fatal delusion, one sex should imagine its interest to consist in the ill-treatment of the other, time would

soon detect their mistake. For how is the species to be continued? How is a woman, for example, to obtain a sound body, and impart it to her offspring, but, among other sources, from the perfect constitution of both her parents? But it is needless to argue on a supposition so incredible as that mankind can be benefited by injustice and oppression.

"'Would we render the limbs supple, vigorous and active? And are there two modes equally efficacious of attaining this end? Must we suppose that one sex will find this end of less value than the other, or the means suitable to its attainment different? It cannot be supposed.

"'We are born with faculties that enable us to impart and receive happiness. There is one species of discipline better adapted than any other to open and improve those faculties. This mode is to be practised. All are to be furnished with the means of instruction, whether these consist in the direct commerce of the senses with the material universe, or in intercourse with other intelligent beings. It is requisite to know the reasonings, actions and opinions of others, if we seek the improvement of our own understanding. For this end we must see them, and talk with them, if present, or if distant or dead, we must consult these memorials which have been con-

trived by themselves or others. These are simple and intelligible maxims proper to regulate our treatment of rational beings. The only circumstance to which we are bound to attend, is, that the subjects of instruction be rational. If any one observe that the consideration of sex is of some moment, how must his remark be understood? Would he insinuate, that because my sex is different from yours, one of us only can be treated as rational, or that though reason be a property of both, one of us possesses less of it than the other? I am not born among a people who can countenance so monstrous a doctrine.

" ' No two persons are entitled, in the strictest sense, to the same treatment, because no two can be precisely alike. All the possibilities and shades of difference no human capacity can estimate. Observation will point out some of the more considerable sources of variety. Man is a progressive being, he is wise in proportion to the number of his ideas, and to the accuracy with which he compares and arranges them. These ideas are received through the inlets of his senses. They must be successively received. The objects which suggest them, must be present. There must be time for observation. Hence the difference is, in some degree, uniform between the old and the young: between those,

the sphere of whose observation has been limited, and those whose circle is extensive. Such causes of difference as these are no less incident to one sex than to the other. The career of both commences in childhood and ignorance. How far and how swiftly they may proceed before their steps are arrested by disease, or death, is to be inferred from a knowledge of their circumstances: such as betide them simply as individuals.

" 'It would, perhaps, be unreasonable to affirm that the circumstance of sex affects in no degree the train of ideas in the mind. It is not possible that any circumstance, however trivial, should be totally without mental influence; but we may safely affirm that this circumstance is indeed trivial, and its consequences, therefore, unimportant. It is inferior to most other incidents of human existence, and to those which are necessarily incident to both sexes. He who resides among hills, is a different mortal from him who dwells on a plain. Subterranean darkness, or the seclusion of a valley, suggest ideas of a kind different from those that occur to us on the airy verge of a promontory, and in the neighbourhood of roaring waters. The influence on my character which flows from my age, from the number and quality of my associates, from the nature of my dwelling-place, as sultry or cold

fertile or barren, level or diversified, the art that I cultivate, the extent or frequency of my excursions cannot be of small moment. In comparison with this, the qualities which are to be ascribed to my sex are unworthy of being mentioned. No doubt my character is in some degree tinged by it, but the tinge is inexpressibly small.'

"'You give me leave to conclude, then,' said I, 'that the same method of education is pursued with regard to both sexes?'

"'Certainly,' returned my philosopher. 'Men possess powers that may be drawn forth and improved by exercise and discipline. Let them be so, says our system. It contents itself with prescribing certain general rules to all that bear the appellation of human. It permits all to refresh and invigorate their frames, by frequenting the purest streams and the pleasantest fields, and by practising those gestures and evolutions that tend to make us robust and agile. It admits the young to the assemblies of their elders, and exhorts the elder to instruct the young. It multiplies the avenues, and facilitates the access to knowledge. Conversations, books, instruments, specimens of the productions of art and nature, haunts of meditation, and public halls, liberal propensities and leisure, it is the genius of our

system to create, multiply, and place within the reach of all. It is far from debasing its views, by distinguishing those who dwell on the shore from those that inhabit the hills; the beings whom a cold temperature has bleached, from those that are embrowned by a hot.'

"'But different persons,' said I, 'have different employments. Skill cannot be obtained in them without a regular course of instruction. Each sex has, I doubt not, paths of its own, into which the others must not intrude: hence must arise a difference in their education.'

"'Who has taught you,' replied he, 'that each sex must have peculiar employments? Your doubts and your conjectures are equally amazing. One would imagine, that among you, one sex had more arms, or legs, or senses, than the other. Among us, there is no such inequality: the principles that direct us in the choice of occupations are common to all.'

"'Pray tell me,' said I, 'what these principles are.

"'They are abundantly obvious. There are some tasks which are equally incumbent upon all. These demand no more skill and strength than is possessed by all. Men must provide themselves, by their own efforts, with food, clothing, and shelter. As long as they live to-

gether, there is a duty obliging them to join their skill and their exertions for the common benefit. A certain portion of labour will supply the needs of all: this portion then must be divided among all: each one must acquire and exert the skill which this portion requires. But this skill and this strength are found, by experience, to be moderate, and easily attained. To plant maize—to construct an arch—to weave a garment—are no such arduous employments, but that all who have emerged from the infirmity and ignorance of childhood, may contribute their efforts to the performance.

"But, beside occupations which are thus of immediate and universal utility, there is an infinite variety of others. The most exquisite of all calamities results from a vacant mind, and unoccupied limbs. The highest pleasure demands the ceaseless activity of both. To enjoy this pleasure, it is requisite to find some other occupation of our time, beside those which are enjoined by the physical necessities of our nature. Among these there is ample room for choice. The motives that may influence us in this choice, are endless. I shall not undertake to enumerate them: you can be at no loss to conceive them without my assistance. But whether they be solitary or social—whether speech, or books, or observation,

or experiment, be the medium of instruction—there can be nothing in the distinction of sex to influence our determinations; or this influence is so inconsiderable, as not to be worth mention.

"'What!' cried I, 'are all obliged to partake of all the labours of tilling the ground, without distinction of rank and sex?'

"'Certainly. There are none that fail to consume some portion of the product of the ground. To exempt any from a share in the cultivation, would be an inexpiable injustice, both to those who are exempted, and those who are not exempted. The exercise is cheerful and wholesome—its purpose is just and necessary. Who shall dare to deny me a part in it? But we know, full well, that the task which, if divided among many, is easy and salubrious, is converted into painful and unwholesome drudgery, by being confined to a sex. What phrenzy must that be, which should prompt us to introduce a change in this respect? I cannot even imagine so great a perversion of the understanding. Common madness is unequal to so monstrous a conception. We must first not only cease to be reasonable—but cease to be men. Even that supposition is insufficient: for into what class of animals must we sink, before this injustice could be realized? Among beasts, there are none who

do not owe their accommodations to their own exertions.

" ' Food is no less requisite to one sex than to the other. As the necessity of food—so the duty of providing it is common. But the reason why I am to share in the labour, is not merely because I am to share in the fruits. I am a being, guided by reason and susceptible of happiness—so are other men. It is, therefore, a privilege that I cannot relinquish, to promote and contemplate the happiness of others. After the cravings of necessity are satisfied, it remains for me, by a new application of my powers, to enlarge the pleasures of existence. The inlets to this pleasure are numberless. What can prompt us to take from any the power of choosing among these, or to incapacitate him from choosing with judgment? The greater the number of those who are employed in administering to pleasure, the greater will be the product. Since both sexes partake of this capacity, what possible reasons can there be for limiting or precluding the efforts of either?

" ' What I conceive to be unjust, may yet be otherwise; but my actions will conform to my opinions. If you would alter the former, you must previously introduce a change into the latter. I know the opinions of my countrymen.

The tenor of their actions will conform to their notions of right. Can the time ever come, will the power ever arise, that shall teach them to endure the oppression of injustice themselves, or inflict it upon others? No.'

"'But, in my opinion,' said I, 'the frame of women is too delicate, their limbs too minute for rough and toilsome occupations. I would rather confine them to employments more congenial to the female elements of softness and beauty.'

"'You would rather, would you? I will suppose you sincere, and inquire how you would expect to obtain their consent to your scheme.'

"'The sentiments,' said I, 'of a single individual, would avail nothing. But if all the males should agree to prescribe their employments to women—'

"'What then?' interrupted my friend. 'There are but two methods of effecting this end—by force or by persuasion. With respect to force, we cannot suppose human beings capable of it, for any moral purpose; but supposing them capable, we would scarcely resort to force, while our opponents are equal in number, strength and skill to ourselves. The efficacy of persuasion is equally chimerical. That frailty of mind which should make a part of mankind willing to take upon themselves a double portion of the

labour, and to convert what is pleasurable exercise to all, into a source of pain and misery to a few—But these are vain speculations; let us dismiss them from our notice.'

"'Willingly, said I; 'we will dismiss these topics for the sake of one more important.—I presume then,' continued I, 'there is such a thing as marriage among you.'

"'I do not understand the term.'

"'I use it to express that relation which subsists between two human beings in consequence of difference of sex.'

"'You puzzle me exceedingly,' returned he. 'You question me as to the existence of that concerning which it is impossible for you to be ignorant. You cannot at this age be a stranger to the origin of human existence.'

When I had proceeded thus far in my narrative, I paused. Mrs. Carter still continued to favour me with her attention. On observing my silence, she desired me to proceed.

"I presume," said she, "your supernatural conductor allowed you to finish the conversation. To snatch you away just now, in the very midst of your subject, would be doing you and me likewise a very unacceptable office. I beseech you go on with the discourse."

"It may not be proper," answered I. "This is

a topic on which, strange to tell, we cannot discourse in the same terms before every audience." The remainder of our conversation decorum would not, perhaps, forbid you to read, but it prohibits you from hearing. If you wish it, I will give you the substance of the information I collected on this topic in writing.

"What is improper to be said in my hearing," said the lady, "it should seem, was no less improper to be knowingly addressed to me by the pen."

"Then," said I, "you do not assent to my offer."

"Nay, I do not refuse my assent. I merely object to the distinction, that you have raised. There are many things improper to be uttered, or written, or to be read, or listened to, but the impropriety methinks must adhere to the sentiments themselves, and not result from the condition of the author or his audience."

"Are these your real sentiments?"

"Without doubt. But they appear not to be yours. However, write what you please; I promise you to read it, and to inform you of my opinion respecting it. Your scheme, I suspect, will not be what is commonly called marriage, but something, in your opinion, better. This footing is a dubious one. Take care, it is difficult to touch without overstepping the verge."

"Your caution is reasonable. I believe si-

lence will be the safest. You will excuse me, therefore, from taking up the pen on this occasion. The ground, you say, and I believe, is perilous. It will be most prudent to avoid it."

"As you please, but remember, that though I may not approve of what you write, your silence I shall approve still less. If it be false, it will enable me at least to know you, and I shall thereby obtain an opportunity of correcting your mistakes. Neither of these purposes are trivial. Are you not aware that no future declaration of yours will be more unfavourable than what you have just said, that silence will be most safe? You are afraid, no doubt, of shocking too greatly my prejudices; but you err. I am certainly prepossessed in favour of the system of marriage; but the strength of this prepossession will appear only in the ardour of my compassion for contrary opinions, and the eagerness of my endeavours to remove them."

"You would condescend then," said I, "to reason on the subject, as if it were possible that marriage was an erroneous institution; as if it were possible that any one could seriously maintain it to be so, without entitling himself to the imputation of the lowest profligacy. Most women would think that the opponent of marriage, either assumed the character for the most odious

and selfish purposes, and could therefore only deserve to be treated as an assassin, to be detested and shunned: or if he were sincere in his monstrous faith, that all efforts to correct his mistakes would avail nothing with respect to the patient, but might endanger the physician by exposing her to the illusions of sophistry or the contagion of passion."

"I am not one of these," said the lady. "The lowest stupidity only can seek its safety in shutting its ears. We may call that sophistry, which having previously heard, it fails to produce conviction. Yet sophistry perhaps, implies not merely fallacious reasoning, but a fallaciousness of which the reasoner himself is apprised. If so, few charges ought to be made with more caution. But nothing can exceed the weakness that prevents us from attending to what is going to be urged against our opinions, merely from the persuasion that what is adverse to our preconceptions must be false. Yet there are examples of this folly among our acquaintance. 'You are wrong,' said I, lately, to one of these; 'if you will suffer me, I will convince you of your error.' 'You may save yourself the trouble,' she answered. 'You may torment me with doubts; but why, when I see the truth clearly already, should I risk the involving of it in obscurity?' I

repeat, I am not of this class. Force is to be resisted by force, or eluded by flight: but he that argues, whatever be his motives, should be encountered with argument. He cannot commit a greater error than to urge topics, the insufficiency of which is known to himself. To demonstrate this error is as worthy of truth as any other province. To sophistry, in any sense of the term, the proper antidote is argument. Give me leave to take so much interest in your welfare, as to desire to see your errors corrected, and to contribute what is in my power to that end. If I know myself so well as sometimes to listen to others in the hope of profiting by their superior knowledge or sagacity, permit me likewise to be just to myself in other respects, and to believe myself capable sometimes of pointing out his mistakes to another."

"You seem," said I, "to think it certain that we differ in opinion upon this topic."

"No. I merely suspect that we do. A class of reasoners has lately arisen, who aim at the deepest foundation of civil society. Their addresses to the understanding have been urged with no despicable skill. But this was insufficient; it was necessary to subdue our incredulity, as to the effects of their new maxims, by exhibiting those effects in detail, and winning our assent to their truth by engrossing the fancy and

charming the affections. The journey that you have lately made, I merely regard as an excursion into their visionary world. I can trace the agreement of the parts which you have unfolded, with those which are yet to come; and can pretty well conjecture of what hues, and lines, and figures the remainder of the picture is intended to consist."

"Then," said I, "the task that I enjoined on myself is superfluous. You are apprised of all that I mean to say on the topic of marriage, and have already laid in an ample stock of disapprobation for my service."

"I frankly confess that I expect not to approve the matter of your narrative, however pleased I may be with the manner. Nevertheless I wish you to execute your first design, that I may be able to unveil the fallacy of your opinions, and rescue one whom I have no reason to disrespect, from specious but fatal illusions."

"Your purpose is kind. It entitles you at least to my thanks. Yet to say truth, I did not at first despair of your concurrence with me in some of my opinions. I imagined that some of the evils of marriage had not escaped you. I recollect that during our last conversation, you arraigned with great earnestness the injustice of condemning women to obey the will, and depend upon the bounty, of father or husband.

"Come, come," interrupted the lady, with a se-

verer aspect; "if you mean to preserve my good opinion, you must tread on this ground with more caution. Remember the atrociousness of the charge you would insinuate. What! because a just indignation at the iniquities that are hourly committed on one-half of the human species rises in my heart, because I vindicate the plainest dictates of justice, and am willing to rescue so large a potion of human-kind, from so destructive a bondage—a bondage, not only of the hands, but of the understanding; which divests them of all those energies which distinguish man from the basest animals, destroys all perception of moral rectitude, and reduces its subjects to so calamitous a state, that they adore the tyranny that rears its crest over them, and kiss the hand that loads them with ignominy! When I demand an equality of conditions among beings that equally partake of the same divine reason, would you rashly infer that I was an enemy to the institution of marriage itself? Where shall we look for human beings who surpass all others in depravity and wretchedness? Are they not to be found in the haunts of female licentiousness? If their vice admits of a darker hue, it would receive it from the circumstance of their being dissolute by theory; of their modelling voluptuousness into a speculative system. Yet this is the charge you

would make against me. You would brand me as an enemy to marriage, not in the sense that a vestal, or widow, or chaste, but deserted maid, is an enemy; not even in that sense in which the abandoned victims of poverty and temptation are enemies, but in the sense of that detestable philosophy which scoffs at the matrimonial institution itself, which denies all its pretensions to sanctity, which consigns us to the guidance of a sensual impulse, and treats as phantastic or chimerical, the sacred charities of husband, son, and brother. Beware. Imputations of this kind are more fatal in the consequences than you may be able to conceive. They cannot be indifferent to me. In drawing such inferences, you would hardly be justified by the most disinterested intentions."

"Such inferences," my dear madam, "it is far from my intention to draw. I cannot but think your alarms unnecessary. If I am an enemy to marriage, far be it from me to be the champion of sensuality. I know the sacredness of this word in the opinions of mankind; I know how liable to be misunderstood are the efforts of him who should labour to explode it. But still, is it not possible to define with so much perspicuity, and distinguish with so much accuracy, as to preclude all possibility of mistake? I believe this possible.

I deem it easy to justify the insinuation that you yourself are desirous of subverting the marriage state."

"Proceed," said the lady. "Men are at liberty to annex to words what meaning they think proper. What should hinder you, if you so please, from saying that snow is of the deepest black? Words are arbitrary. The idea that others annex to the word black, you are at liberty to transfer to the word white. But in the use of this privilege you must make your account in not being understood, and in reversing all the purposes of language.

"Well," said I, "that is yet to appear. Meanwhile, I pray you, what are *your* objections to the present system?"

"My objections are weighty ones. I disapprove of it, in the first place, because it renders the female a slave to the man. It enjoins and enforces submission on her part to the will of her husband. It includes a promise of implicit obedience and unalterable affection. Secondly, it leaves the woman destitute of property. Whatever she previously possesses, belongs absolutely to the man."

"This representation seems not to be a faithful one," said I. "Marriage leaves the wife without property, you say. How comes it, then, that

she is able to subsist? You will answer, perhaps, that her sole dependence is placed upon the bounty of her husband. But this is surely an error. It is by virtue of express laws that all property subsists. But the same laws sanction the title of a wife to a subsistence proportioned to the estate of her husband. But if law were silent, custom would enforce this claim. The husband is in reality nothing but a steward. He is bound to make provision for his wife, proportionately to the extent of his own revenue. This is a practical truth, of which every woman is sensible. It is this that renders the riches of a husband a consideration of so much moment in the eye of a prudent woman. To select a wealthy partner is universally considered as the certain means of enriching ourselves, not less when the object of our choice is a husband than when it is a wife."

"Notwithstanding all this," said the lady, "you will not pretend to affirm that marriage renders the property common?"

"May I not truly assert," rejoined I, "that the wife is legally entitled to her maintenance?"

"Yes, she is entitled to food, raiment, and shelter, if her husband can supply them. Suppose a man in possession of five thousand pounds a year; from this the wife is entitled to mainte-

nance: but how shall the remainder be administered? Is not the power of the husband, over this, absolute? Cannot he reduce himself to poverty to-morrow? She may claim a certain portion of what he has, but he may, at his own pleasure, divest himself of all that he has. He may expend it on what purposes he pleases. It is his own, and, for the use of it, he is responsible to no tribunal; but in reality, this pompous claim of his wife amounts, in most cases, to nothing. It is the discretion of the husband that must decide, as to the kind and quantity of that provision. He may be niggardly or prodigal, according to the suggestions of his own caprice. He may hasten to poverty himself, or he may live, and compel his partner to live, in the midst of wealth as if he were labouring under extreme indigence. In neither case has the wife any remedy."

"But recollect, my good friend, the husband is commonly the original proprietor. Has the wife a just claim to that, which, before marriage, belonged to her spouse?"

"Certainly not. Nor is it less true that the husband has no just claim to that, which, previously to marriage, belonged to the wife. If property were, in all respects, justly administered, if patrimonies were equally divided among offspring, and if the various avenues that lead to

the possession of property were equally accessible to both sexes, it would be found as frequently and extensively vested in one son as in the other. Marriage is productive of no consequences which justify the transfer of what either previously possessed to the other. The idea of common property is absurd and pernicious; but even this is better than poverty and dependence to which the present system subjects the female."

"But," said I, "it is not to be forgotten that the household is common. One dwelling, one table, one set of servants, may justly be sustained by a single fund: this fund may be managed by common consent. No particle of expense may accrue without the concurrence of both parties: but if there be a difference of opinion, one must ultimately decide. Why should not this be the husband? You will say that this would be unjust. I answer that, since it is necessary that power should be vested in one or the other, the injustice is inevitable. An opposite procedure would not diminish it. If this necessary power of deciding in cases of disagreement were lodged in the wife, the injustice would remain."

"But a common fund and a common dwelling are superfluous. Why is marriage to condemn two human beings to dwell under the

same roof, and to eat at the same table, and to be served by the same domestics? This circumstance alone is the source of innumerable ills. Familiarity is the sure destroyer of reverence. All the bickerings and dissentions of a married life flow from no other source than that of too frequent communication. How difficult is it to introduce harmony of sentiment, even on topics of importance, between two persons? But this difficulty is increased in proportion to the number and frequency, and the connection with our private and personal deportment of these topics.

"If two persons are condemned to cohabitation, there must doubtless be mutual accommodation. But let us understand this term. No one can sacrifice his opinions. What is incumbent upon him, in certain cases, is only to forbear doing what he esteems to be right. Now that situation is most eligible in which we are at liberty to conform to the dictates of our judgment. Situations of a different kind will frequently occur in human life. Many of them exist without any necessity. Such, in its present state, is matrimony.

"Since an exact agreement of opinions is impossible, and since the intimate and constant intercourse of a married life requires either that the parties should agree in their opinions, or

that one should forego his own resolution, what is the consequence? Controversies will incessantly arise, and must be decided. If argument be insufficient, recourse must be had to legal authority, to brute force, or servile artifices, or to that superstition that has bound itself by a promise to obey. These might be endured if they were the necessary attendants of marriage; but they are spurious additions. Marriage is a sacred institution, but it would argue the most pitiful stupidity to imagine that all those circumstances which accident and custom have annexed to it are likewise sacred: marriage is sacred, but iniquitous laws, by making it a compact of slavery, by imposing impracticable conditions, and extorting impious promises, have, in most countries, converted it into something flagitious and hateful."

"But the marriage promises," said I, "amount to this, that the parties shall love each other till death. Would you impose no restraint on wayward inclinations? Shall this contract subsist no longer that suits the wishes of either party? Would you grant, supposing you were exalted into a law-giver, an unlimited power of divorces?"

"Without the least doubt. What shadow of justice is there in restraining mankind in this particular. My liberty is precious, but of all the ways in which my liberty can be infringed,

and my actions be subjected to force, Heaven deliver me from this species of constraint. It is impossible to do justice to my feelings on this occasion. Offer me any alternative—condemn me to the workshop of an Egyptian task-master—imprison me in chains of darkness—tear me into pieces—subject me to the endless repetition of toil, and stripes, and contumelies—but allow me, I beseech you, the liberty, at least, of conjugal choice. If you prohibit my intercourse with one on whom my heart dotes, I shall not repine—the injury is inexpressibly trivial. There is scarcely an inconvenience that will be worth enduring for the sake of this prohibited good. My resources must be few, indeed, if they do not afford me consolation under this injustice. But if you subject me to the control and the nauseous caresses of one whom I hate or despise, you indeed inflict a calamity which nothing can compensate:—there is no form which your injustice can assume, more detestable and ugly than this.

"According to present modes, the servitude of a wife is the most entire and unremitting. She lays aside her fetters not for a moment. There is not an action, however minute, in which her tyrant does not assume the power of prescribing. His eyes are eternally upon her. There is no

period, however short, in which she is exempt from his cognizance—no recess, however sacred or mysterious, into which he does not intrude. She cannot cherish the friendship of a human being without his consent: she cannot dispense a charitable farthing without his connivance. The beings who owe their existence to her, are fashioned by his sole and despotic will. All their dignity and happiness is lodged in the hands that superintend their education, and prescribe their conduct, during the important periods of infancy and youth: but how they shall exist—what shall be taught, and what shall be withholden from them—what precepts they shall hear, and what examples they shall contemplate, it is his province to decide.

"A husband is proposed to me. I ruminate on these facts. I ponder on this great question—Shall I retain my liberty or not? Perhaps the evils of my present situation—the pressure of poverty—the misjudging rule of a father, or the rare qualities of him who is proposed to me—the advantages of change of place, or increase of fortune—may outweigh the evils of this state. Perhaps I rely on the wisdom of my partner. I am assured that he will, in all cases, trust to nothing but the force of reason—that his arguments will always convince, or his candour be

accessible to conviction—that he will never make his appealto personal or legal coercion—but allow me the dominion of my own conduct, when he cannot persuade me to compliance with his wishes. These considerations may induce me to embrace the offer.

"If I am not deceived—if no inauspicious revolution take place in his character—if circumstances undergo no material alteration—if I continue to love and to confide, as at the first—it is well. I cannot object to a perpetual alliance, provided it be voluntary. There is nothing, in a choice of this kind, that shall necessarily cause it to expire. This alliance will be durable in proportion to the wisdom with which it was formed, and the foresight that was exerted.

"But if a change take place—if I were deceived, and find insolence and peevishness, rigour and command, where I expected nothing but sweet equality and unalterable complaisance—or, if the character be changed—if time introduce new modes of thinking, and new systems of action to which my understanding refuses to assimilate—what is the consequence? Shall I not revoke my choice?

"The hardships of constraint in this respect are peculiarly severe upon the female. Hers is the task of submission. In every case of dis-

agreement, it is she that must yield. The man still retains, in a great degree, his independence. In the choice of his abode, his occupation, his associates, his tasks, and his pleasures, he is guided by his own judgment. The conduct of his wife, the treatment of her offspring, and the administration of her property, are consigned to him. All the evils of constraint are aggravated by the present system. But if the system were reformed—if the duties of marriage extended to nothing but occasional interviews and personal fidelity—if each retained power over their own actions, in all cases not immediately connected with the sensual intercourse—the obligation to maintain this intercourse, after preference had ceased, would be eminently evil. Less so, indeed, than in the present state of marriage: but still it would be fertile in misery. Have you any objections to this conclusion?"

"I cannot say that I have many. You know what is commonly urged in questions of this kind. Men, in civil society, are, in most cases, subjected to a choice of evils. That which is injurious to one, or a few individuals, may yet be beneficial to the whole. In an estimate, sufficiently comprehensive, the good may overweigh the ill. You have drawn a forcible picture of the inconveniences attending the prohi-

bition of divorces. Perhaps, if entire liberty in this respect were granted, the effects might constitute a scene unspeakably more disastrous than any thing hitherto conceived."

"As how, I pray you?"

"Men endeavour to adhere with a good grace to a contract which they cannot infringe. That which is commonly termed love, is a vagrant and wayward principle. It pretends to spurn at those bounds which decorum and necessity prescribe to it, and yet, at the same time, is tamely and rigidly observant of those bounds. This passion commonly betides us when we have previously reasoned ourselves into the belief of the propriety of entertaining it. It seldom visits us but at the sober invitation of our judgment. It speedily takes its leave when its presence becomes uneasy, and its gratification ineligible or impossible. Youth and beauty, it is said, have a tendency to excite this passion, but suppose those qualities are discovered in a sister, what becomes of this tendency? Suppose the possession to be already a wife. If chance place us near an object of uncommon loveliness and we are impressed with a notion that she is single and disengaged, our hearts may be in some danger. But suppose better information has precluded this mistake, or that it is immediately

rectified, the danger in most cases, is at an end. I am married and have no power to dissolve the contract. Will this consideration have no power over my sensations in the presence of a stranger? If care, accomplishments, and inimitable loveliness attract my notice, after my lot is decided, and has chained me to one, with whom the comparison is disadvantageous, I may indulge a faint wish that my destiny had otherwise decreed; a momentary sigh at the irrevocableness of my choice, but my regrets will instantly vanish. Recollecting that my fate is indeed decided, and my lot truly irrevocable, I become cheerful and calm.

"It is true, that harmony cannot be expected to subsist for ever and in every minute instance between two persons: but how far will the consciousness that the ill is without remedy, and the condition of affairs unchangeable, tend to foster affection and generate mutual compliance.—Human beings are distinguished by nothing more than by a propensity to imitation. They contract affection and resemblance with those persons or objects that are placed near them. The force of habit, in this respect, is admirable. Even inanimate objects become, through the influence of this principle, necessary to our happiness. They that are constant companions fail

not to become, in most respects, alike, and to be linked together by the perception of this likeness. Their modes of acting and thinking might, at first, have jarred, but these modes are not, in their own nature, immutable. The benefits of concurrence, the inconveniences of opposition, and the opportunities of comparing and weighing the grounds of their differences cannot be supposed to be without some tendency to produce resemblance and sympathy."

"This is plausible," said the lady, "but what is your aim in stating these remarks? Do you mean by them to extenuate the evils that arise from restraining divorces?"

"If they contribute to that end," answered I, "it is proper to urge them. They promote a good purpose. Your picture was so terrible, that I am willing to employ any expedient for softening its hues."

"If it were just, you ought to have admitted its justice. We see the causes of these evils. They admit of an obvious remedy. A change in the opinions of a nation is all that is requisite for this end. But let us examine your pleas, or, rather, instead of reasoning on the subject, let us turn our eyes on the world and its scenes, and mark the effect of this spirit by which human beings are prompted to adopt the opinions,

and dote upon the presence of those whom accident has placed beside them. It would be absurd to deny all influence to habit and all force to reflections upon the incurableness of the evil, but what is the effect they produce? In numberless cases the married life is a scene of perpetual contention and strife. A transient observer frequently perceives this; but in cases where appearances are more specious, he that has an opportunity to penetrate the veil which hangs over the domestic scene, is often disgusted with a spectacle of varied and exquisite misery. Nothing is to be found but a disgusting train of mean compliances, despicable artifices, peevishness, recriminations, and falsehood. It is rare that fortitude and consideration are exercised by either party. Their misery is heightened by impatience and tormenting recollections, but the few whose minds are capable of fortitude, who estimate the evil at its just value, and profit by the portion of good, whatever it be, that remains to them, experience, indeed, sensations less acute, and pass fewer moments of bitterness; but it is from the unhappy that patience is demanded. This virtue does not annihilate the evil that oppresses us, but lightens it. It does not destroy in us the consciousness of privileges of which we are destitute, or of joys which have

taken their flight. Its office is to prevent these reflections from leading us to rage and despair; to make us look upon lost happiness without relapsing into phrenzy; to establish in our bosoms the empire of cold and solemn indifference.

"If the exercise of reason and the enjoyment of liberty be valuable; if the effusions of genuine sympathy, and the adherence to an unbiassed and enlightened choice, be the true element of man, what shall we think of that harmony which is the result of narrow views, and that sympathy which is the offspring of constraint?

"I know that love, as it is commonly understood, is an empty and capricious passion. It is a sensual attachment which, when unaccompanied with higher regards, is truely contemptible. To thwart it is often to destroy it, and sometimes to qualify the victims of its delusion for Bedlam. In the majority of cases it is nothing but a miserable project of affectation. The languishing and sighing lover is an object to which the errors of mankind have annexed a certain degree of reverence. Misery is our title to compassion; and to men of limited capacities the most delicious potion that can be administered is pity. For the sake of this, hundreds are annually metamorphosed into lovers. It is graceful to lan-

guish with an hopeless passion ; to court the music of sighs and the secrecy of groves. But it is to be hoped that these chimeras will, at length, take their leave of us.

" In proportion as men become wise, their pursuits will be judiciously selected, and that which they have wisely chosen will continue, for a certain period, to be the object of their choice. Conjugal fidelity and constancy will characterize the wise. But constancy is meritorious only within certain limits. What reverence is due to groundless and obstinate attachments? It becomes me to make the best choice that circumstances will admit, but human affairs will never be reduced to that state in which the decisions of the wisest man will be immutable. Allowance must be made for inevitable changes of situation, and for the nature of man, which is essentially progressive. That is evil which hinders him from conforming to these changes, and restrains him from the exercise of his judgment.

" Let it be admitted that love is easily extinguished by reflection. Does it follow that he ought to be controlled in the choice of his companion? Your observations imply, that he who is now married to one woman, would attach himself to another, if the law did not interpose. Where are the benefits of interposition? Does it

increase the happiness of him that is affected by it? Will its succour be invoked by his present consort? That a man continues to associate with me, contrary to his judgment and inclination, is no subject of congratulation. If law or force oblige him to endure my society, it does not compel him to feign esteem, or dissemble hatred or indifference. If the heart of my husband be estranged from me, I may possibly regard it as an evil. If in consequence of this estrangement, we separate our persons and interests, this is a desirable consequence. This is the only palliation of which the evil is susceptible.

"It cannot be denied that certain inconveniencies, result from the disunion of a married pair, according to the present system. You have justly observed that men are reduced, in most cases, to a choice of evils. Some evils are unavoidable. Others are gratuitous and wantonly incurred. The chief evils flowing from the dissolution of marriage, are incident to the female. This happens in consequence of the iniquitous and partial treatment to which women in general are subjected. If marriage were freed from all spurious obligations, the inconveniences, attending the dissolution of it, would be reduced to nothing.

"What think you," said I, "of the duty we owe to our children? Is not their happiness materially affected by this species of liberty?"

"*I cannot perceive how.* I would, however, be rightly understood: I confess that, *according to the present system, it would:* and hence arises a new objection to this system. The children suffer: but do their sufferings, even in the present state of things, outweigh the evils resulting from the impossibility of separation?—the evil that the parents endure, and the evil accruing to the offspring themselves?

"If children stand in need of the guidance and protection of their elders, and particularly of their parents, it ought to be granted. The parental relation continues, notwithstanding a divorce. Though they have ceased to be husband and wife to each other, they have not ceased to be father and mother to me. My claims on them are the same, and as forcible as ever. The ties by which they are bound to me, are not diminished by this event. My claim for subsistence is made upon their property: but this accident does not annihilate their property. If it impoverish one, the other is proportionably enriched. There is the same inclination and power to answer my claim. The judgment that consulted for my happiness and decided for me,

before their separation, is no whit altered or lessened: on the contrary, it is most likely to be improved. When relieved from the task of tormenting each other, and no longer exposed to bickerings and disappointment, they become better qualified for any disinterested or arduous office."

"But what effects," said I, "may be expected from the removal of this restraint, upon the morals of the people? It seems to open a door to licentiousness and profligacy. If marriages can be dissolved and contracted at pleasure, will not every one deliver himself up to the impulse of a lawless appetite? Would not changes be incessant? All chastity of mind, perhaps, would perish: a general corruption of manners would ensue: and this vice would pave the way for the admission of a thousand others, till the whole nation were sunk into a state of the lowest degeneracy."

"Pray thee," cried the lady, "leave this topic of declamation to the school-boys. Liberty, in this respect, would eminently conduce to the happiness of mankind. A partial reformation would be insufficient. Set marriage on a right basis, and the pest that has hitherto made itself an inmate of every house, and ravaged every man's peace, will be exterminated—the servitude

that has debased one half, and the tyranny that has depraved the other half of the human species, will be at an end."

"And with all those objections to the present regulations on this subject, you will still maintain that you are an advocate of marriage?"

"Undoubtedly I retain the term, and am justified by common usage in retaining it. No one imagines that the forms which law or custom, in a particular age or nation, may happen to annex to marriage, are essential to it. If law-givers should enlarge the privilege of divorce, and new modify the rights of property, as they are affected by marriage; should they ordain that henceforth the husband should vow obedience to the wife, in place of the former vow which the wife made to the husband; or entirely prohibit promises of any kind;—should they expunge from the catalogue of conjugal duties, that which confines them to the same dwelling; who would imagine that the institution itself were subverted? In the east, conjugal servitude has ever been more absolute than with us; and polygamy legally established: yet, who will affirm that marriage is unknown in the east. Every one knows that regulations respecting property, domestic government, and the causes of divorce, are incident to this state, and do not constitute its essence."

"I shall assent," said I, "to the truth of this statement. Perhaps I may be disposed to adventure a few steps farther than you. It appears to me, that marriage has no other criterion than custom. This term is descriptive of that mode of sexual intercourse, whatever it may be, which custom or law has established in any country. All the modifications of this intercourse that have ever existed, or can be supposed to exist, are so many species included in the general term. The question that we have been discussing is no other than this:—What species of marriage is most agreeable to justice—or, in other words, what are the principles that ought to regulate the sexual intercourse? It is not likely that any portion of mankind have reduced these principles to practice. Hence arises a second question of the highest moment—What conduct is incumbent upon me, when the species of marriage established among my countrymen does not conform to my notions of duty?"

"That, indeed," returned she, "is going farther than I am willing to accompany you. There are many conceivable modes of sexual intercourse, on which I cannot bestow the appellation of marriage: there is something which inseparably belongs to it. It is allowable to call by this name a state which comprehends,

together with these ingredients, any number of appendages. But to call a state which wants these ingredients, marriage, appears to me a perversion of language."

"I pr'ythee," said I, "what are these ingredients? You have largely expatiated on the non-esssentials of matrimony: be good enough to say what truly belongs to this state."

"Willingly," answered she. "Marriage is an union founded on free and mutual consent. It cannot exist without friendship—it cannot exist without personal fidelity. As soon as the union ceases to be spontaneous, it ceases to be just:—this is the sum. If I were to talk for months, I could add nothing to the completeness of this definition."

TWO DIALOGUES,

*The first on Music; the second on Painting, as a female accomplishment, or mode of gaining subsistence and fortune.**

DIALOGUE ON MUSIC.

L.—How have I pitied their grovelling taste and perverse sensibility! How have I lamented their insufferable waste of time and abuse of leisure! How many sources of true and beneficial pleasure are forgotten and unthought of, while this passion is fostered; and how, indeed, inferior was this kind of musical performance to that which I pursued.

It is thus, you say, that we are enabled to give pleasure to others; but low, indeed, must be that ambition which is satisfied with pleasing by mere mimicry; by putting off every distinctive property, every thing that constitutes *themselves;* by warbling the words of others, and running through unmeaning, unappropriate, unintelligent notes.

Every one that has fingers, and a larynx fa-

* The first of these Dialogues is a fragment: both are unfinished; but they are too characteristic of the author, and too rich in thought, to be lost.

shioned in a certain manner, is equal to this accomplishment. Neither virtue, nor talents, nor social feelings—any power over the genuine happiness of others, or any *will*, usefully to exercise that power—are required in a musical performer. Ignorance of nature or science, sensuality, caprice, and folly, are all consistent with musical skill. You will say, perhaps, that they are also compatible with genius and goodness, but I doubt it.

That time requisite to make a skilful performer, duty requires us to employ in a better manner. Genius, unexercised, undisciplined, or wasted on frivolous and momentary purposes, will languish and expire; and how deficient, in true taste must she be, who knows not, or holds in contempt, every other mode of employing her precious leisure, and every other mode of entertaining her friends.

When others approach me I am instantly engrossed by tenderness or curiosity. I meditate their features, their gestures, their accents; I am eager to see them smile, or hear them talk; to communicate my own feelings or ideas, and to receive theirs in turn. One impulse of the heart, one flash of wit, one ray of intelligence in myself or my companion, I value more than twenty *oratorios*.

If my companion be unpleasing or improper,

in any way, to converse with, yet I find abundant and profitable occupation in surveying her, in comparing and inferring from what I see or hear: or subjects spring from my own reflection, sufficient to engage my attention. Music may, indeed, be possibly, at some time, necessary to silence the impertinent and please the stupid; and then, perhaps, I might comply with it as I do with any other debasing and luckless necessity.

R.—This, surely, is arguing with too much rigour. You demand too much from human beings, when you oblige them to forego every pursuit, but the best, and every gratification but the highest.

L.—Surely, my friend, you are in jest. It is highly proper to demand this, since, by the very terms you use, compliance will merely be the adoption of the *best* pursuit, and the enjoyment of the *highest* pleasure. I am truly sensible, that music, if it be not the best, is far from being the worst of human pursuits. To spend the day at the harpsichord, is vicious and absurd; but there are *other* ways of spending the day, far *more* vicious and absurd. There are a thousand books to be read, a thousand reveries to be indulged, a thousand companions to be talked to, a thousand topics of discourse and modes of action more foolish and pernicious than eternal

thrumming at an instrument. But what is hence is to be inferred? May I justify an ill action in myself, by reflecting that it is possible to have been worse employed? Am I to encourage another to pursue an evil path by reminding him of the many paths that are still *more* evil?

No. I ought rather earnestly to search for, and recommend a better path and a better mode of conduct. Few of us are so wise, that our present conduct is not obviously hurtful or absurd, and might not, with inexpressible advantage, be changed for a different. Instead of hunting after pleas for indolence and dissipation, and thus still more perverting my taste and weakening my principles, my best interests demand that I should detect, deplore, and abjure my follies and vices, and incessantly labour after higher excellence.

R.—All this is abstractedly true, but I see not any useful application. We are defective creatures, and should labour to cure our imperfections; but, after all our labour, we shall be defective still. We must sometimes form a kind of compromise with our vicious habits. If we cannot, and it often happens that we cannot, allure an individual from a dangerous path by the highest good, or prevail on him to give up indolence for the highest and best species of activity, we must

content ourselves with offering to his choice a lower one. Music is better than lasciviousness or gluttony, and a man will forego the latter for the former, who will not exchange it for poetry or mathematics. To play from morn to night upon a jew's harp, is better than to loll away the year upon a sofa, to saunter it away in the street, or chatter it away at a tea-table.

L.—In that I agree with you, but this surely is no vindication of music.

R.—It is not. It is merely an attempt to justify the preference of music to a worse pursuit. Your feelings and mine, while looking at a player on the harp, are curiously contrasted. You are offended and grieved, because you are busy in imagining some possible mode of employing the same time better. I am pleased, because I exclaim in secret, how much worse, more hurtfully or frivolously might, and probably, all circumstances weighed together, would this creature be employed, if she had not been a minstrel.

But how, let me ask, with your maxims of economy, can you reconcile yourself to so costly an instrument?

L.—I told you that I did not buy it. Had I not attained it without expense, I should not have been a player, and had I been obliged to

restore it to my friend, I should have stopped short at a very early stage in my progress. Luckily for me, however, my friend's abode in New York procured her a husband, who, shortly after marriage, carried her to Scotland, her native country. She left many things in my possession, as tokens of her love, pictures, books, and among the rest, her favourite instrument. My pride remonstrated a little against accepting such a present, but a better motive to reluctance existed than pride. My father's frugality, if I may call it by the mildest name, would never allow me to retain, merely for the purpose of luxury, or what he deemed such, what would readily bring upwards of an hundred dollars. I could hardly persuade him to permit me to keep it merely in trust till my friend's return, or till I should receive her directions to dispose of it.

R.—Methinks I should be glad to hear your performance. Your musical education has been so singular, that I want greatly to know the fruits of it.

L.—I am not surprised at your curiosity, but I am afraid, I confess, to admit your claim. I told you what I thought of the influence of such an education, and when I reflect on what ought to be the benefits of this kind of exercise and

application, during five years, I am ashamed of my slow and imperfect progress.

R.—Do not let that shame, that unworthy shame, govern you.

L.—Unworthy, you justly call it. I cannot deliberately wish to be thought better or worse than I really am. That shall not be an obstacle.

R.—Then pray make haste, and let me judge of your minstrelsy.

L.—No, that can never be.

R.—Never be! You alarm me. Why not?

L.—Have you so soon forgotten my times and occasions? My music, I told you, is an hymn, played alone, at night, and in my chamber. How then can you expect to be an auditor?

R.—And will you not, for once, deviate from your rule? Not to gratify a friend, who requests the privilege, not so much on account of any direct pleasure that will flow from your performance, as to judge of your skill?

L.—That, truly, is a plausible argument *from* you, who have owned yourself without any knowledge, either practical or speculative, of the art, and *to* me, who have a very contemptuous opinion of my own skill. Indeed, I cannot comply. It is not pride or diffidence that hinders, but a long established belief of

what is fit and right to be done on such occasions.

R.—Well, I will not importune you; but, in truth, I can obtain the same end, more effectually, without disturbing your regularities.

L.—As how, I pray you?

R.—By taking post, at midnight, underneath your chamber window. You will then play, without the tremours or misgivings that the conscious presence of a stranger brings along with it. Your inspirations will be free, spontaneous and divine. Your ditty will be heard, more flowing and more sweet, at a little distance, and will borrow, from the stillness of the night, charms that noon-day can never bestow.

L.—*What a scheme for a Sober-sides* like thee! A votary of love and the muses might adopt such a plan, without the blame of inconsistency, but thou—

R.—You mistake, my good friend. The lover and the poet will, indeed, resort to such a scene, but not as listeners. They will bring their pipe or string, their elegy or ode along with them, and lay claim to the homage of attention, but I shall come only with a view to be instructed or delighted by another. I hope you will not disappoint me, by playing in a lower key, or by shutting your windows.

L.—No. I have declined obliging you imme-

diately, not through affectation, not through pride or diffidence; and, therefore, shall not be displeased with any scheme for reconciling your wishes with my scruples. But why lose we thus the precious time in prating. Do you not mark the *farewel beam* trembling on the very topmast leaves of those pines? Let us move to a higher window, whence the sun's last gleamings may be seen. I would rather join with you in watching and admiring the descent of a summer's sun, than in settling the dignity and value of a *Solo* or a *Concerto*.

R.—I am not quite of your opinion, for—

L.—Nay, I will not stay to argue with you. Don't you see? the sun will be set, before you have gotten half through your syllogism. Let us begone this moment.

R.—Go, then, I will follow you.

DIALOGUE ON PAINTING.

L.—What a scene is there? Are you not in raptures with it? You shall not be a friend of mine, if you do not see more charms in a scene like this, than in any spell which music can create.

R.—I *must* be pleased, if that be the condition, and yet, if I were not seated just here, if my pleasure were not heightened by sympathy with yours, and by contrast with the noise, sultriness and tiresome monotomy of the city I have lately left, I am afraid my sensations would not rise to transport.

L.—Insensible creature that thou art! How shall I make thee a votarist of colours; as much enamoured of the pencil as thou pretendest to be of the chords?

R.—It is easily done. Only make your good opinion depend upon my taste, and I will instantly set about acquiring and improving it.

L.—That I cannot do. Your application to painting, such as would make you a proficient, would be far from strengthening your claims to my esteem.

R.—Indeed! How comes it then, that you yourself are so good an artist?

L.—It was, in a very small part, the consequence of inclination. I believe, nature designed me, if any design she had, to be a painter. Of all my senses, I exercised none with so much delight and perseverance as my sight. Impressions, made through this medium, were stronger, more distinct, more durable, than any other tribe of impressions. I found it easier to retain in my fancy, and to describe in words, the features of a face or landscape, once carefully examined, than any person, whose powers, in that respect, I have had opportunity of knowing.

I had, likewise, a wonderful dexterity in giving a moral significance to lines and shades, especially in faces. Every one's character was settled with me, when once his face was surveyed. I was led, at the beginning, you may readily imagine, into strange mistakes, but the detection of these did not dishearten me. They merely occasioned a change in the principles on which I judged of characters.

With all these faculties and habits, it was easy to have made me an enthusiast in painting, at a very early age, but this did not happen. While living with my father, I saw nothing to awaken or direct my wishes in this respect, except now

and then, a few prints of indifferent merit in the houses of my friends, and these I looked upon, for the most part, with unconcern.

The materials of the painter, colours, pencils, and the like, the instructions of an artist, time, and tables, were all necessary, and none of these did I enjoy. My father's parsimony, no less than his notions of what was proper and becoming the female character, denied me all these means; and, to say the truth, I scarcely regretted the want of them. My pleasure lay in marking and analysing the forms of nature, or in depicting imaginary scenes in which these forms, without the pencil's aid, were newly combined and arranged.

I am inclined to believe, that if these advantages had been possessed, I should not have employed them. I was too volatile, too covetous of pleasure and of time, to lose so much of it, in the mixing, and laying on of colours; in copying the works of others, and providing for future excellence, by laborious attention to rudiments and sketches.

The hiccory, seen from my summer-house, robed in verdure and luxuriance, was too beautiful, too deserving contemplation, to be imperfectly portrayed on paper or canvass. I could not have reconciled my impatient spirit to the

drudgery, and did not then see, what I have since discovered, that the purpose of copying directs, disciplines, gives accuracy and vigour to attention and fancy; that objects can scarcely be said to have been seen, that have not been examined with a view to imitation.

Having lost my father, and returned to my aunt Hollis's in England, I had new incitements and new opportunities to make myself a painter. I soon became sensible of my precarious and dependent condition: on how many slight and casual events, my mere subsistence depended. My aunt was not without her virtues. I was, in many ways, serviceable to her happiness; ways, indeed, of which she herself was unconscious, and which her pride would not permit her to acknowledge. This belief enabled me cheerfully to bear numerous inconveniences, but it was, by no means, improbable, that events would take place—marriage, change of residence or temper, which would make it impossible for me longer to live with her, and, in that case, my subsistence must be gained by my own exertions.

I wanted to discover some profession, to which, as a female, young, single, *unpropertied*, I might betake myself. This was a subject of much reflection. I examined the whole catalogue of trades, and weighed, with much care,

their respective claims to my choice. You will smile at my presumption, when I tell you the profession, for which, for some time, I thought myself best qualified, but the dread of your smile shall not make me conceal it; especially as I never carried my design into effect.

I had an active fancy. I had ever been a close observer of faces and manners. I was never satisfied with viewing things exactly as they rose before me. I was apt to imagine, in their order, some change, and to ask, what consequences would ensue if things were *so* and *so*, instead of being as they were? I found little, in my real situation, to gratify or exercise my feelings. My ordinary companions were trite and vulgar characters, with whom I was incapable of sympathy: yet these I loved, if I may so say, to *explore:* to examine their modes of thinking and acting, and to conjecture in what different shapes they would have appeared, had they been placed in different circumstances.

I had, also, an ease in writing, in putting my thoughts into words, in describing characters and incidents, and objects, that few of my age possessed. I knew that the world is pleased with tales of fiction; that this manufacture was considerably popular; that a price was set upon

it, proportioned not merely to quantity and number, but to the genius and dexterity displayed by the artist. Why, thought I, may I not pursue the footsteps of so many of my sex, from Madame Scudery down to Mrs. Bennet, and endeavour to live upon the profits of my story-telling pen? The tools of this art are cheap. The time employed in finishing a piece of work, and the perfection of the workmanship will much depend upon myself. I am fond of quiet and seclusion. I wish not to be molested by selfishness, the superintendence, the tyranny of masters and employers. I wish to blend profit and pleasure, health and purity of conscience. I wish to benefit others by the means of profiting myself. I wish for intellectual and moral occupation. Can any calling be more favorable to all these ends than the writing of romances?

I had always used myself, from a very early age, to set down my thoughts and adventures daily, upon paper. This was a kind of religious duty, the omission of which was as inexcusable as that of my nightly hymn. To preserve some record of the past, to state my employments during the day, and my progress in useful knowledge, in however few words, I conceived to be my duty, and this, unless in extraordinary circumstances, I have never omitted.

To this practice I ascribe my facility in writing, in painting emotions of the heart, and recounting dialogues, and this I came at length to regard as a kind of education or apprenticeship to the trade which now appeared most deserving to be followed.

Full of this new scheme, I began to tutor my invention, to settle plans and discipline my taste. I looked about for a model, whose style and manner I might assiduously copy, and began sketches of different works.

While thus busied, I became acquainted with Mrs. Eckstein, the widow of an artist who came from Saxony, and settled with his wife in London many years before my return thither. This man acquired decent subsistence by portrait miniature-painting. His wife had a genius for the same art, and, under her husband's instructions, became no mean proficient. She employed her skill to increase the common fund, first, by occasionally copying her husband's pictures, when copies were required, and, at length, by painting from female originals.

Gradually, the business was divided between them, and the female faces were constantly transferred by Eckstein to his wife. Her skill came into fashion and repute, and the gains of the wife were little inferior to those of her husband

They had no offspring, and mere domestic avocations were unsuited to her taste.

Though their gains were considerable, they lived without much foresight or economy. All they gained during the year, they spent before the end of it, and hence, at Eckstein's death, his wife was left without any means of support but her profession.

She possessed much general literature; of an independent though improvident spirit, she had little respect for the ordinary maxims of the world, and of her sex; and when you had surmounted your punctilios, and reconciled yourself to a few seeming, for they were not real, infractions of decorum, you found her a valuable friend.

Our acquaintance began after her husband's death, and quickly ripened into confidence and intimacy. I paid her frequent visits at her lodgings; was, of course, prompted to examine her arrangements and performances, and to reason on the nature of her art.

Every thing that I saw coincided with my early propensities, and my new schemes for employment and subsistence. Here was an example of one who pursued no servile or dishonourable trade, and who, with a little difference of character, with more attention to the delicacies of her sex, and with more neatness in

her household, more economy in her expense, might, in a few years, acquire such opulence as to dispense with daily application. Might not this example deserve to be studied and followed?

As soon as my friend discovered my thoughts, she expressed great eagerness to encourage and assist me in my undertaking; expatiated, with great zeal, on the advantages of her pursuit, offered me the use of her models, her colours and apartments, and even importuned me to take up my abode with her, and form a kind of partnership.

To this, however, there were obstacles, arising partly from certain dissonances and disparities between our characters and manners, and partly from the temper and views of my aunt, which were not to be surmounted. I was willing, so far, to profit by her offers, as to take, daily, her instructions in the art. For nearly two years I was an assiduous scholar, and my zeal being seconded by inclination and by interest, I made no despicable progress.

R.—Did you confine yourself merely to the face?

L.—Chiefly to the face. I sought for, and laboured after, excellence in no other branch of the art. No object, in the circle of nature, more merits to be looked upon and studied than the

human countenance, and never is there any danger of exhausting its varieties. My observation was thus rendered acute, vivid, and limited to one class of objects, and my source of pleasure was augmented in a degree surprising to myself.

R.—Had you ever any need of lucratively applying your skill?

L.—Never. Fortunately, I have passed my life, hitherto, without the necessity of purchasing my food with my labour.

R.—What use then have you made of your skill?

L.—Chiefly for my own gratification, and for that of my friend. I was lately counting up the faces, real and imaginary, which I had sketched during three years, and dividing them into classes. What, think you, was the number?

R.—I should be glad to know.

L.—The number is three hundred and fourteen, which, on an average, is hardly less than one in three days, but in truth, I applied myself to painting with much regularity. Some portion of almost every day I bestowed upon it.

R.—But how could you procure subjects for such constant occupation?

L.—There never could be want of subjects as long as I lived in human society; while faces met my eye, there were always some among them

singular and striking, by their novelty and their significance. If real faces were wanting, I tasked my fancy, and, forming a scale, which included every possible modification of features, had always a subject for my pencil.

My pictures were of several kinds. The first were such as were drawn at the request of my friends, and for their use, as tokens or memorials of affection or respect.

The second were such as were executed for my own: either those whom I loved, and who sat while I drew, or others whom their characters, their adventures, or their countenances rendered anywise remarkable, and whose faces were drawn either from casual inspection or from memory.

A third kind consisted of imaginary faces. As my favourite employment always was to feign characters and incidents, I, of course, was prone to create suitable forms and faces, and these frequently I pencilled with great care.

I perceive, intuitively, relations between the intellectual character and the outward form. My experience has supplied me with a great number of materials to work with. Having always particularly noted faces, being attentive to the demeanour and inquisitive into the history of those to whom they belong, I may, perhaps, rely with

some degree of confidence on my physiognomical decisions. At any rate, every face makes a strong, and vivid, and distinct impression on my fancy. I can trace the features upon paper, even in its absence, with tolerable fidelity.

My fancy is wont to exert itself in two ways: first, to conjecture the history and character of those whose faces only have been seen; and secondly, to conjecture the lineaments and form of one, whose history and character only are known. These processes have afforded me many an instructive, or, if you please, many an amusing hour. Hence, I have amassed a large stock of those images which revisit me in solitude, and give celerity and pleasure to those moments that would otherwise be vacant and wearisomely slow.

R.—And what estimate do you form of the advantages flowing from your application to the pencil? Was the choice of this profession the best that could have been made? Was there no other pursuit, in which the same application would not have produced more delightful consequences?

L.—These are questions more easy to be put than answered. As a calling, I cannot hesitate to prefer this to any other. I could not make myself lawyer, physician, merchant, or divine. The necessary trades of building, tailoring and

cooking, were only to be followed through necessity. Music, painting, and needle-work were all that remained, and these were useful to subsistence, either as being practised or taught.

To *teach* an art to others, is, without doubt, unspeakably worse than to practise it: more toilsome, more degrading, less favourable to cultivation of the understanding and the temper, and to liberty, and less gainful.

Needle-work and pencil-work have some things in common, but their differences are those which subsist between forming a statue with a wooden mallet and a steel chissel, between the sport of an hour and the task of a year. The pencil is alive, active, creative, and a wonder-worker, but the needle is sluggish, inanimate and dead; the enemy of all zeal, the obstacle to all progress; the mother and the emblem of plodding and stupid perseverance. I merely speak of the needle, as the tool of fancy, the agent of embellishment. In all useful works, we cannot overrate its value, or the importance of every female being thoroughly mistress of it.

Music has its charms: but to gain a living by the practice is to shew ourselves at concerts and the theatres: to forfeit all esteem, and trample upon delicacy, and to set at nought a good name.

R.—But, are music, needle-work and painting,

the only paths open to ingenious females? You mentioned, that you first designed to become an author. Your sex did not exclude you from this. Your education and your genius were remarkably adapted to it. The implements and materials were cheap, easy, and to be wrought up with less exposure to the world, less personal exertion, and less infringement of liberty, than in Eckstein's vocation.

The passion for fame, the fervours of pathetic, or the brilliance of sportive eloquence, the sense of contributing to the benefit and pleasure of remote nations and distant generations, all invited you to take up the pen, and yet you took up the pencil instead.

L.—I am not unaware of the manifold advantages which a moral fiction has over a portrait. I regret, now that I look back upon the past, that so many hours were not given to books and the pen. My portraits have benefited and delighted me, but when I think upon the progress which a different devotion of my time would have enabled me to make, in useful and delightful knowledge, I have no terms to convey the sense, not merely of my folly, but my guilt. How many volumes might I not have read, might I not have written; how might my knowledge of man and nature, of poetry and science have been en-

larged, if all those days, and all that zeal, which, during five years, were absorbed by painting, had been dedicated to the poets, historians and philosophers! But, thanks to my wiser years, the infatuation is now at an end, and the pencil is laid aside for ever.

R.—For ever? Do you mean never to paint again?

L.—Never: unless upon some very extraordinary exigence. The truth is, that the *end* of application—the ability to figure to one's self, and to retain, in memory, the features of another, was long ago accomplished. To form a definite image, it is no longer requisite to paint it—to recall it to view, it is no longer necessary to turn to my *port feuille*. Having not to paint for subsistence, but for pleasure; and every pleasurable purpose being attained, without the actual use of the pencil, I must lay it aside.

But, if its aid were as indispensable as ever, I would not use it again.

R.—Why?

L.—Because my time can be more usefully employed with a book. Formerly, I spent a precious hour stooping over a table, with eyes rivetted to the whitened surface, my reason at a stand, and my fancy fixed upon a single set of features. If permitted to wander, it was only by

fits, at random, through the maze of vague and discontented recollections; whence my mind returned exercised, but not improved—weary and bewildered.

Now, that hour enables me to traverse a league of this variegated surface—to cheer my mind, and strengthen my frame, by passing through a half-score vallies, and ascending a half-score hills. I examine twenty faces, or landscapes, of Nature's forming, whose lines and colours I can never hope to emulate—instead of producing one uniform, perishable, and imperfect creature of my own.

If I choose to betake myself to books—what a world is open before me!—how worthy of minute and never-tired contemplation! How many structures of poets and philosophers may be examined in the time mis-devoted to a picture!—what insight may be gained into the mechanism of human society, and the laws of human action, by pursuing the vicissitudes of individuals, or of nations, from their hour of birth to their hour of extinction.

I once, while living with a friend in Hampshire, employed three hours one morning, in copying a head of Raphael: having tired my fingers at this work, I went into a closet where

there were a few books, and thought to amuse myself with whatever chance should offer.

I lighted on Dryden's Virgil, and opened at the fourth book of the Æneid. I read it through in about an hour; and was so much pleased, and so conscious of the many things unobserved, or unreflected on, at the first perusal, that I immediately began again: I went through it, and could not resist the inclination to begin it a third time.

It was a favourable moment: my mind was active, and my attention vigorous. It is impossible to describe the number and vividness of my conceptions—my new views of composition, morality, and manners, and government, all rapidly flowing from this source. My enthusiasm prompted me to read aloud: and not my intellectual powers merely, but my physical and vocal powers—my eye and my ear—were beneficially exercised. The incidents, images, phrases, and epithets, impressed themselves with remarkable force upon my memory. There are few of the lines contained in this book, which have not, many times, casually, or, in consequence of efforts to recall them, been repeated. The pleasures and benefits flowing from the employment of these three hours, are, indeed, endless in va-

riety and number; and they form a sort of bright spot in the scene of my past existence, on which I meditate with a nameless kind of satisfaction.

On a similar occasion, afterwards, I opened, accidentally, Robertson's Scottish History, and read for three hours. During this time, I had deliberately perused the whole story of Mary's sufferings, from her flight across the Tweed till her death.

I cannot describe the effect of this narrative upon my mind: it deeply affected me. I wept plentifully; and yet my emotions were not painful: they were solemn, ecstatic, and divine. The sudden influx of new ideas seemed like an addition to my mental substance. I began to live a new existence; and was sensible of faculties for virtue and happiness, of which before I had not had a glimpse.

How often have I since compared the occupation of these hours, with those consigned to painting, and regretted that I did not sooner awaken from my dream!

Then, however, these delights had no other effect than to make me attempt to draw, merely from fancy, first, a portrait of Dido, and then one of Mary. I afterwards met with a fine portrait of

the mother-queen, at Holyrood-house; and with a bust of the *infelix Eliza*, in a gallery at Naples. The emotions with which I contemplated these pieces, were wholly owing to my knowledge of their history; and were so different from any which my own performances had given, that I wonder at my still adhering to the pencil.

Now, instead of delineating the eyes, nose and lips of him or her whose adventures I have just read or heard, I put down all my reflections on the story upon paper, and where I formerly sketched the face of another, I now exhibit my thoughts, enlightened, methodized, and extended by the very act of putting them into words.

R.—But here, I make the same remark which I formerly made as to your music. The mind necessarily demands relief from variety and change. Why may not painting and music be admitted to diversify the scene, at intervals, however rare and brief?

L.—I have no intervals to spare. I find no satiety, no decay of curiosity, no langour of spirits, except from the intermission of my favourite employments. I do not spend my whole time in writing or reading, or in lonely musing. I have personal and household occupations to attend to. I have visits to pay and to receive;

conversations to sustain, and rambles to take. My present and absent friends lay claim to some of my time, and I practise, I assure you, not a slight degree of self-denial, in withholding myself from the pen and the book as much as I do.

THE END.

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